Making Hospitality Management Programmes Relevant to Industry

'A Case Study'

by

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ABSTRACT

There has been a considerable debate in recent years about the 'fit' between hospitality management education and the needs of the hospitality and tourism industries, with allegations of disproportionate 'wastage' of vocationally labour market entrants to other sectors of the economy.

This study began by outlining the evolution of hospitality education in the UK. The study then reviewed models of vocational education and discussed their relevance to hospitality management education. A discussion of the effects of political, industrial and educational debate has been included.

A case study has provided an historical review of the evolution of the BA Honours Degree in Hospitality Business Management in an important FHE college, which is the largest single provider of hospitality education in the UK. The study goes on to highlight the transition of graduates into the workplace from 1992 to the present time.

The first sections of the study were completed using exhaustive secondary research carried out using all of the library resources at my disposal. The case study was achieved using primary research techniques of questionnaire and follow-up interviews with the graduates and with senior programme administrators from the college. Use of the Dillman (1977) method ensured an exceptionally high response rate to the questionnaire, although it is probably true that my power-distance relationship with the respondents also had a positive effect on the response rate. The researcher also believes that the responses received from the graduates truthfully reflected their views on the questions asked.

The final section of this dissertation discusses and analyses the results of the primary research and this is the major innovative part of the work. During the course of the research, a number of themes emerged, and the discussion is aligned with these themes, providing a framework for the analysis.

The content of the courses, comprising the four-year programme were generally seen as appropriate by the respondents. However, a number of possible changes were identified which might improve the programme. One surprising result was that it emerged that no change would be needed to fit graduates for the industry for the next decade. A second surprise was the low ranking given to information technology and numeracy by the respondents. This must surely be a misconception by the graduates and this finding is in need of further research.

The term 'graduateness' was generally little understood by the respondents. However, once they were familiarised by the meaning underpinning the term, they did comprehend that graduate skills were of considerable importance. Indeed their understanding of graduate skills related very closely to those defined NAB (1986). However, the discussion of their evaluation of numeracy has already been outlined.

Not surprisingly, there was considerable overlap between discussion of course content and teaching methods. However, it is important to mention that one of the main issues arising was that of the use of information technology and multimedia in course delivery. This research has found that these methods are seen to be of growing

importance for communication and dissemination of information between students, industrialists and educationalists in the hospitality industry, being a truly world-wide industry.

One major area of discussion which has arisen in my research is the industrial placement experience. An important finding has been that despite whether the students had received a successful industrial placement experience or not, almost all agreed that industrial placement experience was an essential component of the programme. In fact the research identified that industrial placement is so important, that the government should consider funding research to investigate the value added to students on vocational programmes, with a view to extending the benefits to other subject areas before they undertake primary cost reduction by cutting funding for industrial placement in hospitality management programmes.

With regard to employment issues, there were three issues that arose. First, the changing character of the hotel industry, which is likely to provide less opportunity for management development for graduates. Nevertheless, the research identified despite this trend that a very large percentage of graduates were still finding employment in hotels at the present time. Second, the limited language skills of UK graduates, which the research considers as an important negative factor for UK graduates in a time of globalisation and EU aggregation. Finally, UK educational institutions depend to some extent upon recruitment of students from overseas (full fee paying). The recessionary developments in the global economy, especially in the Far East, should give cause for some alarm by UK universities and colleges in this respect.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out at the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The thesis has not been presented to any other University for examination in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed .....

Date.....

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGCAS	Association of Graduate Career Advisory Service
BAHBM	Bachelor of Arts, Hospitality Business Management
BCFDA	Birmingham College of Food and Domestic Arts
BCFTCS	Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies
BEC	Business Education Council
BHA	British Hospitality Association
BHRCA	British Hotel, Restaurant and Caterers Association
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CHRIE	Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education
CVCP	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals
CNAA	Council for National Academic Awards
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfEE	Department for Employment and Education
DoE	Department of Education
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Centre
ETAC	Education and Training Advisory Council
FE	Further Education
FECs	Further Education Colleges
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification

GSP	Graduate Standards Programme
HCI	Hotel and Catering Institute
HCIMA	Hotel, Catering & Institutional Management Association
HCIMA	Hotel, Catering International Management Association
HCTC	Hotel and Catering Training Company
HDI	Hotel Development Incentive Scheme
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Schools and Colleges
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
HND	Higher National Diploma
IMA	Institutional Management Association
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
NAB	National Advisory Body
NCER	National Council for Educational Research
NCHCE	National Council for Hotel and Catering Education
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualification
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OND	Ordinary National Diploma
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency

SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TEC	Technical Education Council
TOPs	Training Opportunities Programme
TQM	Total Quality Management
TVEI	Technical Vocational Education Initiative
UFI	University for Industry
YOPs	Youth Opportunities Programme
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Stimulus for the Study

Justification for the Study

The present study can be justified as being novel for a number of reasons as set out below. In addition I will argue that the study has both an academic and a vocational merit, which give importance to the research.

Any literature review will show that there is a large body of research in the area of schools (both primary and secondary) worldwide, and there is little need to document citation evidence for this. A similar literature review would demonstrate a large body of research on degree and postgraduate level education.

Review of literature by Luke and Ingold (1997) has shown that there is very little literature on the Further Education (FE) system in the UK. Furthermore, the UK system of FE is different to most tertiary education systems in the rest of the world. It has been described as the "Cinderella of Education" (Luke and Ingold, 1995) in that its funding has been limited and erratic, and despite the fact that it is the largest single sector of the UK education system, it has been marginalised from mainstream education. It was not until the publication of the Kennedy Report (1997), that the major contribution of the FE sector became noticed or recognised. The present study, although it is targeted on HE students, has been carried out in a FE college, which further reinforces the novelty of this study.

The study of Hospitality Management (HM) education is also sadly limited, particularly in the UK. Wood (1998) has suggested that HM as a field of study is ill defined. This is despite the fact that UK government figures show that hospitality and tourism are one of the major growth areas of the UK economy (Hirst 1997 p16).
I consider that although there have been some limited studies carried out in the USA on graduates entering the hospitality industry, this is the first such study in the UK. Further, the present study transcends previous studies in that it not only reviews destinations in a quantitative manner, but it attempts to discover what the necessary skills and competencies are that managers in the hospitality industry will need for the beginning of the 21st century.

There are many definitions of the term 'Hospitality' and the most recent elicited research states that:

> *". . . Hospitality is a contemporaneous exchange designed to enhance mutuality (well-being) for parties involved through the presence of at least one of the 'trinity' of food, drink and accommodation."*
>
> (A definition of hospitality formulated by the Hospitality Studies Group, Nottingham, April 1997.)

The concept of hospitality has deep historical roots which are generally associated with positive connotations as identified by Langley and Moore (1936). They found evidence that it had been a habit of nations throughout the ages to look upon hospitality provision as a virtue and to esteem the people who delight in it. The Bible, the literature of ancient Egypt and India, the Odyssey, and innumerable works of the classics period abound with praises of the courteous host, and in more recent times every country has glorified in some tradition of generosity to guest and stranger, from honoured dignitary to penniless exile. It is from these roots that the contemporary,

commercially orientated, hospitality provision has been manufactured. With the growth, legislation and formalisation of hospitality a need for management evolved.

So what is hospitality management? There are two implicit disciplines ie Hospitality and Management. Both these disciplines are determined as social, economic and political, but neither can be granted any epistemologically privileged status. As Wood (1998, p2) states:

> *"Hospitality Management does not exist other than as a linguistic label employed to describe certain courses of study, styles of research, and so on, prevalent in certain parts of the Academy."*

He further asserts that:

> *"It is not Hospitality Management, but the management of hospitality . . . if we mean the application of one set of intellectual constructs and practices(management) to another (hospitality)."*

The advantage of this approach to the formulation of the term 'hospitality management' leaves academic institutions to determine what constructs and practices together with their application might 'make up' the content of the educational programme in this discipline.

Although an increasing number of management texts have been written for hospitality managers and hospitality management education, very little research attention has been paid to the work of hospitality managers.

Initial Stimulus for the Study

My interest in the work of hospitality managers arose primarily from my involvement in the provision of undergraduate and post-graduate education. Industry, government

and society in general, demand education that is more relevant and are consequently forcing educational institutions to take a close look at their programmes of study.

> *"Educators, employers, managers and graduates themselves are questioning whether today's graduates are adequately prepared to enter the workforce."*
>
> (Getty, Getty, & Tas 1990, p393-404)

On-line searches through ERIC and ABI Inform databases revealed very little research in this area utilising quantitative techniques of data gathering together with qualitative richness. As noted, this is a unique approach.

The International Journal of Hospitality Management, the Hospitality Research Journal, HCIMA Year Books, HCIMA Hospitality Journal, Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly, Hospitality and Tourism Educator and the Hospitality Education and Research Journal, all key research journals in the field of hospitality education, revealed quantitative studies of hospitality graduates relative to programme linkage with satisfaction and jobs. (Purcell & Quinn 1994; Barker 1996; Demonte and Vaden 1987; Gregory and Laker 1988; Pavesic 1988; McCleary and Weaver 1989; Bartholemew and Freedman 1990; Brymer and Pavesic 1990; Knutson 1990; Zabel 1990; Baum 1991; Durocher and Goodman 1991; Marshall 1991; Cullen 1993). The studies cited above are those which address the graduate in relation to their employment in different sectors of the hospitality industry, mainly focusing on destinations, expectations of students or on specific tasks rather than 'direct' evaluation of a programme.

It was identified after discussion with senior hospitality managers that there were serious concerns about the constantly changing nature of their work and the lack of

preparation to deal with and understand these changes, and the implications for their work. Some of the organisational changes which hospitality managers have experienced in the last ten to fifteen years are detailed in Chapter 1.

Aims and Overall Design of the Study

The aim of this research is to identify which sector of the hospitality industry BCFTCS graduates went into and within that sector, in what type of department they were employed and to ascertain how well they perceived that they had been prepared for the work-place. To date, no formal evaluation of the curriculum by programme graduates has been conducted to determine the relevance of the programme's curriculum relative to the graduate's intellectual development, and their preparation for positions in the hospitality industry now and into the millennium.

More specifically, the objectives of this study are as follows:

i) to investigate the evolution of hospitality education in the United Kingdom;

ii) to compare existing models of vocational education and to ascertain their relevance to hospitality management education;

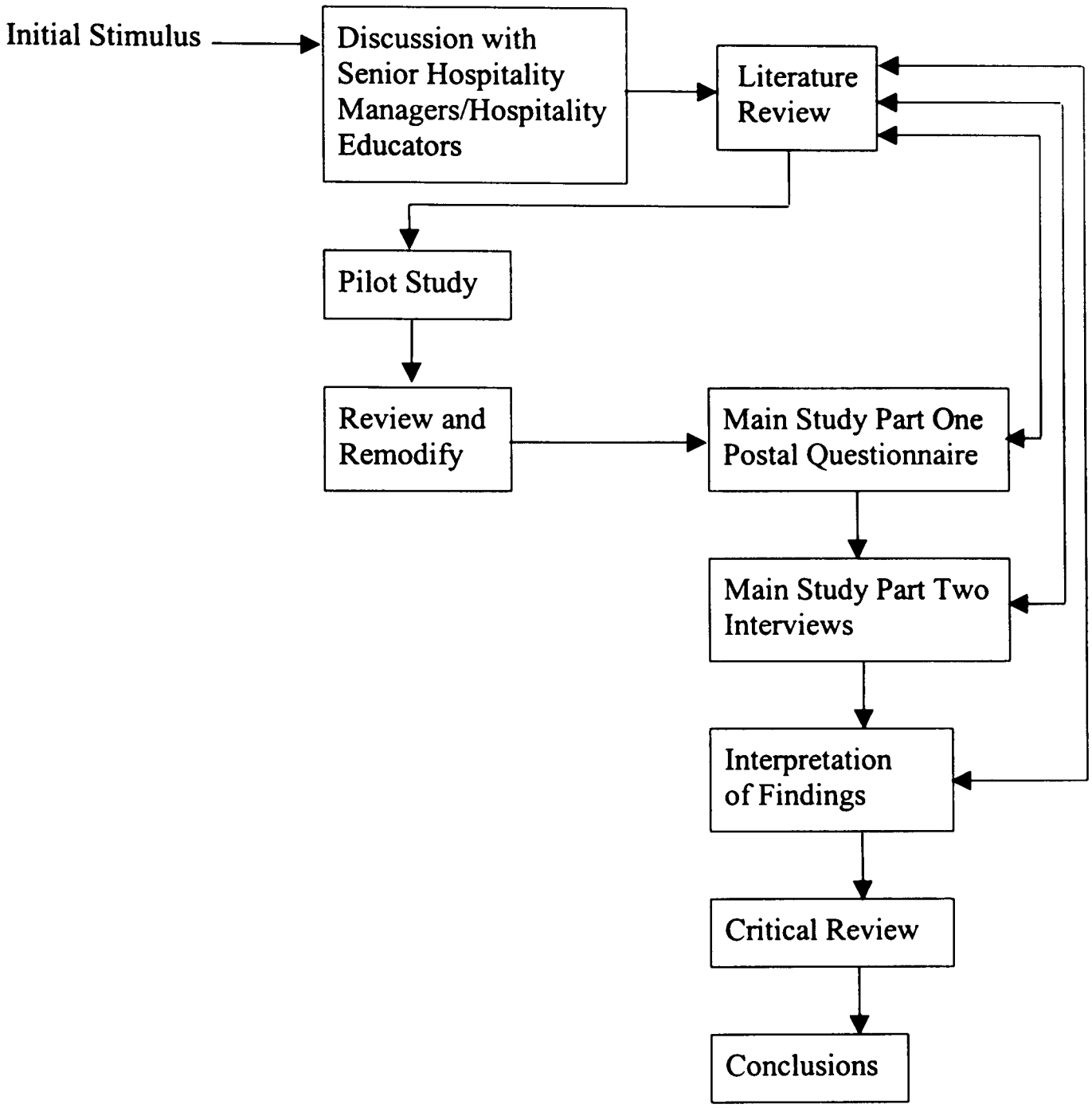
iii) to provide a brief historical review of the BCFTCS BA (Hons) in Hospitality Business Management programme, highlighting the transition of graduates to the workplace;

iv) to conduct a follow-up study of these graduates from 1992-97 to review their perceived preparedness for industry. The research sought to find some major areas that the graduates thought to be important for developing hospitality management education to meet future needs.

It is anticipated that the outputs from the study will provide practical and useful knowledge and understanding to curriculum developers and senior hospitality managers.

In order to achieve the aims of the study, the research was designed as shown in Figure 1 below: (This design will be considered in more detail in Chapter 3.)

Figure 1 (The Organisational Framework)



CHAPTER 1

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY AND ITS EDUCATION IN CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction

Before proceeding to the main body of the study, it is important that the reader understands the nature of the hospitality industry, and how and why it is distinctive. This chapter therefore reviews management in the hospitality context. It then identifies the current employment trends in the hospitality industry, providing further justification for the research.

The chapter will follow the development of hospitality management education from its beginnings as a vocational qualification developed in conjunction with industry, through its progression of providing academic underpinning at degree and postgraduate level. This is not to assume that this is necessarily a provision that is either wanted or needed by the industry. Indeed, one of the aims of the present study is to assess how current education fits the student for employment in the industry.

Finally, the chapter will outline, briefly, the development of hospitality management education at the institution under study. This should provide the reader with an understanding of how the institution has changed over the years since its inception. Once again, it is important not to prejudge whether the changes have been beneficial in preparing students for industry. Indeed it could be argued that pressures from within the education system itself, such as competition for students, may have played a role in this shaping process. Nevertheless, whatever the causes of change, the

central theme of this dissertation, focusing on preparing employees for the industry, will still be relevant.

1.1 What is Hospitality Management?

The definitions of 'Hospitality Management' existing in the literature tend to be typified by a primary concern with placing emphasis on a particular product/service focus. A good example of this is provided by a recent 'Review of Hospitality Management' study commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and conducted by a panel of educationalists and industrialists. This document defines hospitality management as "having a core which addresses the management of food, beverages and/or accommodation in a service context" (HEFCE 1998, p2).

King (1995, p220) accurately points out ". . . the effective management of hospitality in any type of organisation must begin with a clearly understood definition of what hospitality is". If it is accepted that hospitality may arise in both private/domestic and public/commercial contexts, it is also logical to suggest that the management of hospitality provision will equally occur in both contexts. Whether management is primarily regarded as an art, a science, a function or a process, Fayol's (1949) view that it is concerned with co-ordinating, communicating, controlling, planning, and commanding is generally accepted. All of these fundamental aspects of management are to be found in the management of hospitality exchanges within both domestic and commercial contexts, regardless of whether such exchanges take place for social or economic motives. Whatever the context and scale of any hospitality exchange it needs to be managed to a greater or lesser extent (Brotherton 1998).

1.2 The Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is complex and comprises of food service, lodging, recreation and travel management and it has emerged only relatively recently as a major worldwide industry (Foucar-Szocki, 1988, pp319-335). Growth in size and complexity of operations have increased demand for entry-level managers with expertise in multiple disciplines, for example, in operations, technology, human resources, and business management.

Since the end of the Second World War, there have been dramatic changes in the hospitality industry. Many influences have contributed to this phenomenon, for example, the work of professional, trade and governmental agencies, and changes in the economic structure, together with the unforeseen growth in tourism. The provision of hospitality to the traveller has always been an important service which can be traced back to the beginning of civilisation. The industry is not an easy one to explain or define and estimates of manpower engaged in its provision is very varied indeed. There are no accurate figures for the number of hospitality organisations in this country and even the terms 'hospitality' and 'hotel' are not clearly defined.
In a legal sense, the hospitality services were first recognised in the Catering Wages Act of 1943, which resulted in the setting up of the Catering Wages Commission, and of Wages Boards for the Industry. However, most of the available information about the Industry is based on the Standard Industrial Classification, the Industry having been included in this system since 1948.

In practice, a wide range of organisations is included: hotels, motels, holiday camps, guest houses, boarding houses, hostels, restaurants, cafes, snack bars, milk bars,

coffee bars, refreshment rooms, tea shops, function rooms, fish and chip shops, ice cream parlours, public houses, residential and licensed clubs, industrial and school canteens.

Many influences can be seen to have affected the expansion of the UK hospitality industry. For example, the growth in consumer expenditure changes in the economic and social structure in Great Britain and the dramatic increase in tourism. The recognition of the value of service industries, having moved much to the forefront of the British economy since the recession of the early eighties, has had a most significant effect on the hospitality industry.

Standards of living have generally increased over the last forty years with the consequence that the services provided by the industry have become much more available to a greater proportion of the population in this country. Considerably more people are now taking holidays and this, coupled with the expansion in business travel on a global basis, has led to a more focused industry, with distinct sectors.

Domestic tourism has provided a major bonus for industry, but it has been the growth of international tourism that has prompted a change in attitude by the government, to the hospitality industry. Tourism is now the UK's leading service 'export', representing an estimated 4 per cent of GDP. The hotel industry constitutes a major part of the tourism sector as 36 per cent of all overseas tourists' expenditure is on accommodation. For UK domestic tourists it is slightly higher, at 37.5 per cent. In 1994, total turnover was worth £6.1 billion (Key Note Market Report - 1995, pp 2-6).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that this growth has continued to date, although no more recent quantified evidence is available.

1.2.1 *The Development of the Hospitality Industry in the UK*

The development of the hospitality industry can be traced as far back as the Druids and the Romans who have left the earliest recorded examples of the provision of hospitality (Jones and Lockwood, 1994 p2). It was not until the early 1800's however, that hotels as we know them today began to appear. In the 19th century, as sea bathing became popular, resorts like Brighton and Blackpool saw an increase in hotel provision. In the twentieth century the railway companies, which carried an ever-increasing number of holidaymakers to the resorts, also developed hotels at their termini, such as Paddington and Charing Cross in London and Birmingham New Street. In 1910, the British Hotel, Restaurants and Caterers Association (BHRCA) was formed to represent hoteliers' interests.

In addition to the changes in the size, scale and distribution of the industry, there have been significant changes in the structure of the organisations that own and operate hotels. In the early 1970's, there were only three UK hotel chains of significant size, namely Trusthouse Forte, Grand Metropolitan and British Transport Hotels (Jones and Lockwood, 1989). The situation has changed considerably through the past twenty years, not only through policies of acquisition, driven by the boom in property prices, but also through substantial hotel building programmes. The most significant aspect was the Development of the Tourism Act 1969, which created the Hotel Development Incentive scheme (HDI), resulting in some 60,000 new hotel bedrooms

by the mid-1970's. The increase in requirements for qualified staff and managers led to an expansion in hospitality management education.

During the 1980's, after the early recessionary years, there was a boom era, since hotels were at that time viewed as good long-term property investments. Global tourism markets increased, which led to major international chains opening properties in the UK, for example, Sheraton, Marriott and Accor.

Mixed fortunes have been apparent for the hospitality industry during the 1990's, as once again the recession early in this decade played its part in the downturn of British Industries in general and this included the hotel sector. Major hotel groups, who had expanded and prospered during the 1980's, found themselves in dire financial difficulties. For example Resort Hotels were taken over by the relative newcomer to the industry, Jarvis Hotels, during this period. Queens Moat Houses, who had expanded their portfolio during the property boom of the previous decade, found that their properties were wildly over-valued and consequently ran into severe financial difficulties.

The budget end of the market, which included Forte Travelodge and Whitbread Travel Inns, developed during this difficult period. By 1995, 300 units of purpose-built budget accommodation, which had not been considered an option during the HDI era, had been constructed and opened countrywide, (Key Note Report - 1995). The accommodation was priced at below £40 per room, per night, which made these units very attractive to a variety of clients. They also achieved occupancy rates of over 80 per cent, which is considerably higher than the national average for the

traditional hotels in the UK. In 1994 room occupancies for the UK have been calculated, at an average for the year, of 46 per cent (British Tourist Authority 1995). On the down side, however, these budget units, with few additional services available to guests, had little to offer in the way of career opportunities for graduates with hospitality management degrees.

1.3 Employment Trends in the Hospitality Industry

Employment in the hospitality industry has been one of the major growth areas of the UK economy, with an estimated 2.4m employees in 1992 (HCTC 1994) constituting some 9.5 per cent of the UK workforce. Managers and Supervisors make up some 24 per cent of the total number.

The norm had been for managers in the hospitality industry not to be qualified above craft level, if at all. Indeed, the Education and Training Advisory Council (ETAC) Report (1983), which was heavily influential in shaping the development of vocational training in the hospitality industry, showed that 50 per cent of managers, 66 per cent of supervisors and 50 per cent of skilled personnel, did not hold a catering qualification of any kind. The report concluded that qualifications held for different job categories within the hospitality industry were generally one level lower than the equivalent job category in other industries.

The Hotel and Catering Training Company (HCTC) in its research 'Meeting Competency Needs' (1992), estimated that the hospitality industry would require some 654,000 new recruits per annum, or 13,000 per week over the period 1990 to 1998 in order to fill those positions lost through retirement and other net losses

expected. That was in addition to the estimated 70,000 new jobs being created during the period. For supervisory and managerial staff they anticipated that some 3,000 skilled staff would be required, per week, with college output only likely to provide 7 per cent of the annual replacement needs for qualified managers. Consideration was given to the fact that the situation would be aggravated due to the high proportion of hospitality graduates taking up positions outside the industry (CNAA 1992).

The situation is also exacerbated when, in recruiting qualified managers the industry is drawing from the pool of qualified and experienced supervisors, which in turn leads to skill shortages at this level and subsequently at craft level.

The HCTC (1992) survey showed that only 10 per cent of hospitality managers held a Higher National Diploma or Degree compared to 41 per cent in other industries. Additionally, compared to other industries where only 12 per cent of managers held no qualification, some 30 per cent of hospitality managers were unqualified. Although there has been a slight increase in qualified management within the hospitality industry over recent years, there is considerable scope for improvement.

1.4 The Hospitality Manager

Managers in the hospitality industry have a tendency to view the industry as unique and to regard it as somehow special and unlike any other industry (Mullins 1992). Guerrier and Lockwood (1989, p82-89) pointed out that developments have been made over the last twenty years and increasing emphasis is being placed on ways in which ideas drawn from general management theory may be applied to the industry.

This, in itself is comforting, as according to Fearn (1971, p37)

> *"Little progress has been made in terms of management attitudes, knowledge and thinking. When one considers the astounding management progress in industries which have been created during the century, it is difficult to account for the lack of progress and change in the hotel and catering industry."*

Perhaps one of the most important things to note is that people come into hospitality management careers via a range of routes. Baum (1988) in the context of the Irish Republic, identified three principal sources of hotel managers: those who come with formal hotel school training; those who train for management within the industry after starting either in craft positions or being given a traineeship; those who have an early career in another industry, followed by late entry into the hotel industry.

Gamble and Messenger (1989, p10) when writing in *Hospitality* re-iterated the point that hotel managers come up through the ranks, in commenting that:

> *"Few hospitality managers hold a higher diploma such as an HND, Degree or professional qualification, suggesting that many managers are promoted from within the industry, after starting their careers as chefs and food service staff."*

Stone (1988) also found that hospitality managers tend to have a lower scholastic achievement than managers in other industries. While this finding may be representative of present day managers it will not necessarily apply to hotel managers of the future.

Anderson (1991, p27), investigating the type of education and training undertaken by hospitality managers in Scotland, revealed that:

> *"While 65% of the sample held formal qualifications, some 33% held none and of the latter, some 75% indicated that they believed formal qualifications would not have been of benefit to them."*

A further point is that hospitality management, like other professions such as medicine and law, is notoriously insular. Those who follow a formal course of training in hospitality management are generally separated from general business studies students. In addition, hotel and catering education normally incorporates periods of industrial placement, serving as a form of pre-entry socialisation into the occupation of hotel management. (Wood 1992, p80) There is still a perceived idea that to be a hospitality manager, one must possess vital technical skills, particularly in the field of food and beverage management, in order that control can be wielded over other powerful groups, such as chefs (Guerrier 1987). However, in his study, Baum (1988, p139) suggests that:

> *"While the business environment in hotels does have very distinct features, there is a danger that the emphasis which the industry places on uniqueness, should not be at the cost of the application of the more general principles of good management."*

Most senior managers in the hospitality industry have, in the past, obtained their appointments at a relatively early age, which indicates that prospects for career advancement are good for graduates. However, once again Guerrier (1987) found that career progression was linked most closely to the person's ability and acceptability to move locations frequently.

Goldberg (1986, p43) sums up the industrialist's view of what constitutes management training:

> *". . . there is a universal expectation that you cannot expect to tell people to clear up a mess unless you have done it in the past yourself. Potential managers must be prepared to be shoved about until they have demonstrated their worth."*

Such a view is supported by the assertion that:

> *". . . the emphasis still seems to be on developing managers who can clean the toilets or carve smoked salmon, not managers who can use a spreadsheet on a microcomputer or develop a marketing plan."*
>
> (Guerrier and Lockwood 1989, p123)

It is hardly surprising then if many hospitality graduates feel under-employed and over-qualified, and thus become disillusioned during the formative years in the job. This situation of practical emphasis in hospitality management is not likely to last forever and as Mullins and Davies (1991, p23) suggest:

> *"As the manager advances up the organisational hierarchy we would usually expect greater emphasis to be placed on conceptual ability and proportionally less on technical ability. Accordingly the balance between technical competence and conceptual ability should be determined by the potential managers' expected level of entry into the industry and the likely patterns of their future career progression."*

According to Teare (1994), Charles Handy anticipates that in future, managers will not be required to direct and control others, but instead, will need to be able to develop staff and facilitate teamwork - in essence moving towards a more supportive role.

1.5 The Hospitality Manager - Origin and Evolution within the Educational System

The qualities of the hospitality manager are not only varied and complex but also change with varying economic influences. An article written on this subject some 60 years ago, describes some of the qualities required by an hotel manager of the time as follows:

> *"Boys of the public school type who wish to become hotel managers are to have a special two year course at the LCC Hotel and Restaurant School. There they will learn some of the thousand things that the hotel manager must know. The '100 per cent' hotel chief must know how to receive a king, or how to teach a waiter his job or give a little advice to the chef."*
>
> Cited in (Hayter, R 1980, p69)

One of the first milestones for catering education was in 1873 when the National Training School of Cookery opened in South Kensington and this was followed in 1910 by the formation of the School of Cookery at Westminster Technical Institute in Vincent Square. Until these dates, the training of catering staff had been unsystematic and very limited.

The Times of 16th November, 1911 reported on the course at Westminster:

> *"The original course was for three years and the boys had to be between 16 and 17 years old when admitted. In addition to Practical Cookery, French, the language of the kitchen was taught with other general subjects."*
>
> Cited in (Hayter, 1980, p69)

In 1912, the Times reported that:

> *"BC Bachelor of Cuisine may be the next degree at the Universities"*
>
> Cited in (Hayter, 1980, p69)

In the following year, Mr Iwan Kreins (headmaster of the school for 26 years) proposed to build a 20-bedroom hotel to be linked with the school but for various reasons the hotel was never completed.

1.5.1 *The Evolution of Management Training - The First Institutional Management Courses*

Although the Institutional Management Association (IMA) was established in 1938, it wasn't until 1943 that the Association felt that if they were to be taken seriously as a professional body then they would have to have some national qualification which would be recognised for entry. As a result of a number of meetings consisting of employers, educationalists, and Ministries of Education, (representatives from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland), a suitable syllabus was recommended for the training of persons in institutional management and in 1947, the IMA became the examining body. The course was based on two years full-time study terminating in a written examination, followed by a compulsory third year in employment. At the end of the third year all students would present a thesis written during their period in employment and attend a *vive voce* examination. Successful students were awarded the IMA Certificate in Institutional Management and Housekeeping.

1.5.2 *National Council for Hotel and Catering Education (NCHCE) and Hotel and Catering Institute (HCI)*

The National Council for Hotel and Catering Education was established in June 1947. The Council concentrated on offering courses not covered by the City and Guilds of London Institute. Their first development was education and training in food service skills and later the hotel Book-keeper/Receptionist course.

The Hotel and Catering Institute (HCI) was formed in November 1949, and eventually the NCHCE was dissolved leaving the HCI responsible for the examination work previously undertaken by the NCHCE. In 1955, the HCI had devised a course of study, which led to the Associate Membership of the Institute. Mr B C Edwards, the then Secretary of the Institute is reported as saying:

> *"The course would have a managerial bias and successful students would be able to use the letters AHCI after their name indicating that the holder was a well qualified person, just as Associate Membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and the letters ACA denoted the well qualified accountant or auditor."*
>
> Cited in (Hayter, 1980)

The HCI continued to offer membership courses until its amalgamation with the IMA in 1971, when new courses were designed. The newly formed Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management Association (HCIMA) (renamed in 1997 to International) updated their entry, course and examination systems in 1978; the first students to graduate for membership did so in 1979/80.

1.5.3 *The HCIMA Part B Membership Course*

The HCIMA Part B course began in September 1978. The syllabus and course structure were the outcome of wide consultation with industry and education, including that embodied in the report 'Tomorrow's Managers' by the HCIMA in 1974 and in Paul Johnson's 'Corpus of Knowledge' in 1977.

In addition, the Association introduced a more rigorous system of approval for vetting colleges to offer the new courses, linked with demanding staffing criteria, requiring

appropriate qualification as well as recent industrial experience. Industrial experience was made a more important element of the new course.

1.5.4 *Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) in Hotelkeeping and Catering*

The HCI had been involved since 1959 in the administration and control of the National Diploma courses and acted as secretariat. The standard of this award was between that of the Ordinary National Diploma (OND) on the one hand and a Higher National Diploma (HND) on the other.

The OND and HND courses in England started in September 1969. The OND in Hotelkeeping and Catering was a two-year full-time course, the aim of which was to train potential supervisors. The aim of the HND in Hotel and Catering Administration, a three-year sandwich course, was to train potential managers.

As a result of the Haselgrave report published in 1969, significant changes were made in the pattern of education within further and higher education establishments during the late 1970's and early 1980's. The main ideology contained in the report was that of technocratic rationalisation and emphasis on the vocational and economic relevance of education. The OND and HND courses, previously validated by the Joint Committee for National Certificates and Diplomas, were ultimately replaced by TEC National and TEC Higher National Diploma in 1980/81, under the auspices of the Technician Education Council.

A further development took place in 1983 when the Technician Education Council (TEC) and the Business Education Council (BEC) merged, to form the Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC). BTEC set its aims to:

> *"Advance the quality and availability of work related education for those in and preparing for employment in business, technician, professional and related occupations."*
>
> BTEC (1984)

The BTEC Higher National Diploma qualification in hospitality-related disciplines have been undertaken in many colleges and universities since its inception. The aim of the course was, and still is, to prepare students to eventually embark on a career as a manager in the provision of food and accommodation services.

Enrolments in higher education for hospitality courses have increased at a dramatic rate since 1969. The growth pattern in institutions offering BTEC Higher National Diploma courses in hospitality related subjects, is evidenced by the increase from 25 institutions in 1985, to 90 institutions some eight years later (HCIMA Survey of Enrolments 1993). However, this is probably now set to decline, due to rationalisation brought about by the new funding methodology.

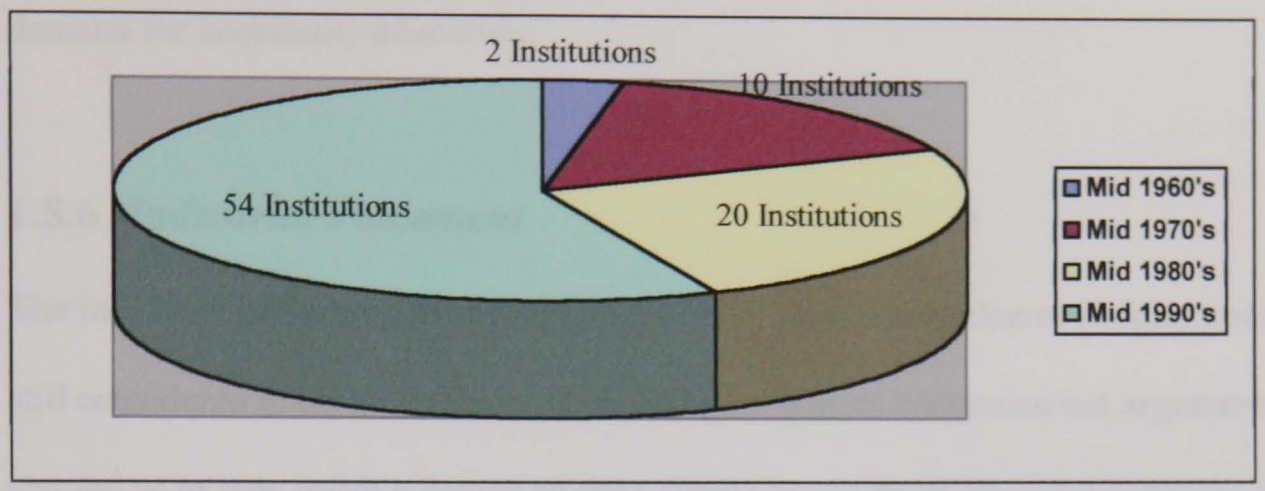
1.5.5 *The Evolution of Degree Programmes in Hospitality Management*

The university sector had been largely reluctant to develop hospitality management first degree programmes, apart from the initial interest from a few of those newly chartered in the mid 1960's (eg Strathclyde and Surrey). The practical element required in hospitality management could have proved to be the main detractor for this sector to advance significantly.

Other sectors of the higher education system, in contrast, realising the importance and growth potential of hospitality and related industries, have increasingly become involved in this field. The polytechnic network, with its interest in providing vocationally orientated courses, expanded the provision during the 1970's and 1980's under the auspices of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), which was established by Royal Charter in 1964, as the main awarding body in the UK, serving the non-university sector. Expansion continued into the 1990's with the polytechnics, having become independent in 1988, following the Government White Paper:- 'Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge' (April 1987) and then gaining University status in 1992, as a result of the White Paper: - 'Education and Training for the 21st Century' (May 1991). At that time, the CNAA ceased to function, since the newly formed universities and some colleges and institutions of higher education were given the power to award their own degrees.

There has been a dramatic growth in the provision of hospitality management degree programmes since their inception in the mid 1960's. Figure 2 below identifies just two institutions offering hospitality degree programmes in the mid 1960's increasing to 54, by the mid 1990's.

Figure 2 Institutions Offering Hospitality Management Degree Programmes



Source: Hayter R, (Careers and Training in Hotels, Catering and Tourism – 1993) and Hayter R, (Guide to College Based Programmes – HCIMA/HCTC – 1995)

Most honours degree programmes in hospitality offered in England and Wales have a four-year structure, usually with students spending a period of their studies on industrial placement. This placement is normally between 36-48 weeks in length and is usually undertaken in the middle of the programme. The main focus of the taught element of most hospitality degree programmes is business and management studies.

Research undertaken by both the CNAA (1992) and HMI (1992) pointed to the salient curricular features of the pattern of hospitality degree provision in the then polytechnic sector:

> *"Most courses are generalist and all embracing . . . Employers frequently express the view that they seek generalist managers and are not in favour of an undue degree of specialism . . . No course has yet shifted its emphasis to interpersonal skills development, with a reduced concern for technical competence in hotel and catering . . . The content of most courses is similar and progresses from a study of foundation and technical matters, through operational aspects to a strategic perspective in the final year. Business and Management subjects are taught through a medium of hotel and catering activities and the operational aspects are considered within a managerial framework."*
>
> (CNAA 1992, pp5-7)

Summarising, this expansion has come rapidly over the last two decades, as a result of the considerable growth in the hospitality industry, which in turn has increased demand for hospitality education.

1.5.6 *Industrial Placement*

The industrial placement element of hospitality management degree programmes is still considered to be an invaluable benefit by all parties concerned but arguments abound as to how much a degree student should know about practical elements, prior to undertaking the placement period. Once again, the CNAA report highlights such views:

> *"Arguments about the level of expertise students are expected to acquire include a view that they should immediately become effective operatives during work experience. Another view is that students need only to acquire limited expertise in college as they can learn operative skills during the work placement . . . Employers frequently comment about the inadequacy of the practical skills aspects of some degree courses. This is a matter to be resolved and highlights what may be a misunderstanding of the respective roles of education and industry and of the function of degree programmes. Meeting both educational and vocational objectives at first degree level may mean that practical skills will always be less than desired by industry."*
>
> (CNAA 1992, p6)

Many interested parties have joined the discussion on the need and value of the industrial placement period and particularly on the likelihood of its effect on future career choice.

Farrell (1997) Hilton Hotels' director of training and development states:

> *". . . on the whole, we recruit through college placements. We take students for 48 weeks, train them up to supervisory level, and hope they come back to fill supervisory posts and join our management training programme".*

Leslie (1991, p67) also joined the argument in expressing the benefits of the placement period, whilst at the same time highlighting concerns over the effect that a poor placement could have on future graduate entry into the industry:

> *"On returning to college, students will exchange information about their placements, both through formal procedures and informally. This peer exchange of information will influence career choice. Students returning with glowing accounts of placement experiences may generate extra interest in a particular company, with adverse reports having the opposite effect."*

He went on to say - though more as a reminder to industry, that they should view the placement period with a higher profile:

> *"In the final analysis, the Hospitality Industry benefits substantially every year by taking on students for periods of Industrial Placement. If greater attention is given to what happens to students during their placement periods, then more students will return."*

However, Purcell & Quinn (1994, p16) found on the subject of industrial placement:

> *"Supervised Work Experience is a key factor in encouraging or dampening students' enthusiasm for the industry. Over one third of our respondents became less enthusiastic about their career in hospitality as a result of their supervised work experience and they are less likely to have remained in the industry than their peers. Type of placement often affects ultimate career direction within hospitality."*

Research undertaken to date with respect to industrial placement seems to reveal that the only agreement that can be reached is that it should continue. Certainly, if the three parties to the placement period, the student, the employer and the college/university all agree on this, then that is a good starting point. All three parties must do their utmost to make the period of work placement relevant, valid and beneficial, if students are to be attracted to return to take up a position within the hospitality industry at a later stage. The HCIMA have emphasised this through inaugurating the 'Hospitality Partnership', in the format of a supervised work

experience, a triadic alliance between colleges and universities the hospitality industry and students. (Code of Practice/See Appendix 1).

1.6 Hospitality Management Education at the Cross-roads

Gamble (1992, p13) stated that:

> *"There would be three important trends that would impact the hospitality industry over the next decade: globalisation of the world economy and world communications, expansion of technology, and a shift in focus of human resources."*

Globalisation, facilitated by elimination of political and economic barriers to trade, has stimulated the growth of multinational hospitality companies which are unencumbered by national allegiances. There has been a growth of these flexible companies who have been able to move quickly from country to country, chasing natural resources, cheap labour, and tax accommodations. The trend in technological advances has and will continue to ensure fast, sophisticated communication for instantaneous information exchange. The development of cheaper and lighter-weight materials has made it possible to transport goods and people faster than ever before. Trends in human resource management target the front line employee. Decentralised, flattened organisations with empowered employees, who seek quality in the production of goods and services, require very different management tactics and completely new human resource strategies. Because of the impact which these three trends have had on the hospitality industry, they will have to be addressed by hospitality management educators as they prepare entry-level managers for a global economy.

Change is likely to be a constant in our global society. Kanter (1992) emphasised people's need to be flexible, to expect change and to be prepared to adapt. She states that employment security no longer exists. As a result, 'employability security' will become the goal of every employee. The key to employability will be continual professional development. Managers will need to know how to learn and should expect to continue learning throughout their careers.

As the hospitality industry continues to expand and becomes more complex, hospitality education curricula will be under pressure to follow. The industry depends specifically on hospitality education to support its continued growth (Williams, 1990). Although hospitality education curricula differ between one University and another, educators commonly depend on professional work experience or planned industrial placement to provide for the application of theory, to practise hands-on skills and to learn workplace socialisation. Hospitality educators are challenged to expand subject matter areas to meet current trends within a four-year degree programme. Colleges and universities are using two main strategies. First, institutions have begun to differentiate themselves by creating niches of specialisation, focusing their curriculum emphasis (Goodman, Jr and Sprague, 1991). For example, some UK institutions have taken a pure research focus while others have taken a specialised operational focus like Licensed Retail Management, Golf Course Management or Convention and Conference Management. Second, educators are emphasising the content and structure of their student professional work experience to maximise the benefit of the student's experience. Virtually every hospitality management degree programme requires at least one professional work experience period (Foucar-Szocki, II, 1992). Evidence of this emphasis is found in the subject of the 1994 annual research

conference of the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) 'Education Through Experience'.

Many segments of the hospitality industry experienced rapid growth during the decades of 1960 through 1980. Such a growth, however, is unlikely to repeat itself and can now be expected only at the pace of the economy (Powers & Riegel, 1993). In addition, as already stated there has been massive organisational restructuring in the hospitality industry. This restructuring includes incorporation of total quality management (TQM) with a consequent reduction in the number of middle managers, increase of multi-unit management control, empowerment of employees, and decentralisation in organisations (Powers & Riegel, 1993). Powers and Riegel (1993) continue with the assertion that these changes have created a shift toward more simplified systems with fewer but more complex supervisory levels.

As widely reported by business journals and trade magazines, the UK work force is not adequately skilled or educated to meet these changes or prepare for the technological changes of the future (Pavesic 1993, pp285-294). In this era of hospitality industry change and retrenchment, conceptual skills will be required for management survival (Powers & Riegel 1993, pp 295-308).

Van Hoof (1991, pp50-73) reiterates the importance of higher education institutions working closely with hospitality industry leaders to monitor and evaluate the usefulness of a programme and then tailor the programme accordingly. Van Hoof believes this should help clarify faculty perceptions, student objectives, and industry expectations regarding the degree curriculum. The significance of the present research

lies in addressing these points. This will be undertaken by surveying alumni who are, at present, professionals in the hospitality industry.

The issues outlined in the foregoing sections pose an educational quandary. Is the Hospitality Management Degree offered by BCFTCS meeting the need to produce 'The Hospitality Professional of the Future'?

1.7 Profile of the Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies

The origins of the College can be traced back to the late nineteenth century with the foundation of a Municipal Technical School offering cookery and household science courses. The School operated from a number of sites within the City and the College's archive records the establishment of a 'cookery room' in 1918.

In 1927 the name of the Municipal Technical School was changed to the Central Technical College. By the 1950's the College was renamed the College of Technology and a department of Bakery and Domestic Science was established. In 1956, the Chief Education Officer, EL Russell, recommended to the Local Education Authority the setting up of a separate college dealing with catering, bakery and domestic science. The new College of Bakery, Catering, Domestic Science and Associated Studies opened in 1957. The following year the name was changed yet again to the Birmingham College of Food and Domestic Arts. The College continued to operate on many sites across the City until 1968 when the current premises in Summer Row Birmingham were opened. Another name change in the late 1980's, to the Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies, was designed to recognise the diversification of the College's programmes.

Apart from the name change the College has undergone several internal re-organisations, both in its physical make-up and in the academic and administrative structure. Tourism and leisure management courses were introduced in the mid 1980's which added to the 'service orientated' focus of the College. The College is still quite different from other FE and HE institutions in three distinct ways:

1. The specialist nature of the College's educational provision and its high percentage of Higher Education provision reflects the work of a 'monotech' rather than a general further education college.

2. The spread of course provision from vocational training and further education National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ's) through to higher education Higher National Diploma, Degree and Post Graduate courses.

3. The College recruits its students locally, nationally and internationally.

All of the degree and post-graduate programmes offered by the college are validated by The University of Birmingham, through an accreditation and association agreement.

1.7.1 *The History of Hospitality Management Programmes at BCFTCS*

Whilst BCFTCS had previously offered programmes leading to management qualifications, it was not until 1969 that the first Higher National Diploma (HND) course in Hotel Management was launched and piloted at the College. From this a

nationally recognised standard was achieved. The course commenced with 15 students on a three-year, full-time sandwich basis. The numbers have escalated over the years, and there are now (1998) over 500 students enrolled on the course over the three-year duration.

1.7.2 *The First Degree Programme at BCFTCS*

In 1986 the College worked with the then Birmingham Polytechnic to submit a joint proposal for a four-year sandwich degree in Hospitality Management to the CNAA. The College started the first Hospitality Degree in 1988 with a cohort of 36 students.

To reflect the increasing demand for degrees in hospitality subjects the College had, by 1998, successfully developed a portfolio of five hospitality-related first degrees and three postgraduate programmes.

1.7.3 *The BA/BA (Hons) in Hospitality Business Management Programme*

The rationale behind the introduction and aims of the BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management course, as stated in the Definitive Course Document (1991) and which can be seen in full in Appendix 2, set out to address the need for more graduates who were vocationally oriented towards the Hospitality Industry. Particular reference was made to the HCTC's report, 'Meeting Competence Needs' (1992), which highlighted an anticipated large shortfall of qualified management staff in the future, coupled with the recognised limited current output from colleges and universities, as outlined earlier in this chapter.

The programme is constructed on a modular basis (See Appendix 3), with the theme of both core and technical modules running throughout the programme. The four-year programme is structured as shown below:

Year	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 1	College based	College based
Year 2	College Based	Industry Based
Year 3	Industry Based	College Based
Year 4	College Based	College Based

The industrial placement component of the programme is 48 weeks in length and students are placed in hospitality establishments in the UK and worldwide. The placement is a compulsory component of the programme, but at present, does not count towards the final classification of the degree. The BA HBM has been developed with a specific aim in mind:

> *". . . to produce graduates with the knowledge and skills which will enable them to enter the hospitality industry with the potential of making an immediate contribution to the management team."*
>
> (Student Handbook 1997/98)

The teaching methods employed in the delivery of this programme include lectures, demonstrations, practical classes, seminars, field visits, visiting speakers, group exercises and tutorials. Students' progress is evaluated through a combination of examinations, coursework assessment and seminar exercises. In the final year a dissertation must be completed with the aim of extending the student's field of knowledge and improving research and investigation skills.

Additionally, some subjects such as strategic management and operations management are based on case studies to allow the student to relate concept and theory to practical reality. Teaching methods are interactive, embracing student participation in group discussion to encourage analytical thinking.

On completion of the programme, graduates should possess a number of transferable skills, such as: communication, adaptability, data and problem solving, leadership and team working, which are identified as desirable by the Standing Committee of Employers of Graduates (Teare & Boer 1996, p110).

The research undertaken sampled alumni graduates from the above programme and attempted to identify whether the aim as described previously is actually being achieved.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has attempted to provide an overview of the Hospitality Industry from its origins in the early historic period, through its maturation in the 19th century, culminating with its current important position in the UK economy.

Hospitality management education began as an entity in the late 19th Century. It has developed over subsequent years to provide certificated courses, initially at diploma level, but latterly at degree and post-graduate level. Over this period the educational institutions have tried to provide courses relevant to the industry, but with patchy input from industrialists themselves.

This chapter has shown BCFTCS has paralleled this development and is now the largest single provider of Hospitality Management education in the UK.

The next chapter goes on to review vocational education, and to discuss the place of Hospitality Management education within this context.

CHAPTER 2

HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

2.0 Introduction

Part One

The preceding chapter has reviewed the history of hospitality management and some of the issues that have affected the development of hospitality management education. This chapter turns to examine vocational education as a concept. The political, industrial and educational dimensions of vocational education will be discussed, together with their relevance to hospitality management education itself. It is important that the reader fully comprehends the history of the development of vocational education, as it is one of the key factors relating to the underpinning philosophy of the current research. This is, in part, about the academic versus vocational education debate, which is particularly relevant to the hospitality industry. Indeed a cynic might question whether a hospitality manager needs an academic education at all. As will be discussed, many of the managers of the 'old school' were drawn from the ranks of chefs and waiters who progressed through to seniority without any, or with only minimal formal education or training.

2.1 Introduction to Vocational Education

In the early days of hospitality education, there had been little or no formal vocational education available. Skills had been transmitted to future generations by the 'father to son' system or by the more structured 'apprentice system' which operated in this

country for many centuries. The term 'vocational education' is a loose concept that can be interpreted in many ways. It is sometimes argued that the changes in curriculum, which have characterised the development of the educational system as a consequence of industrialisation, have been mainly a trend towards 'vocationalism'. The process of education is always, in part vocational, in so far as it must be concerned with the transmission of skills and values.

2.2 What is Vocational Education?

'Vocational Education' like so many educational terms and concepts, carries with it a variety of possible interpretations, very often each being in accordance with the personal viewpoint of the individual concerned. From the 'liberal-humanist' perspective, education may be seen as an end in itself, in that the student will realise his or her own potential for his or her own sake. On the other hand, vocational education can be viewed from a 'monetarist' perspective, where one may argue that:

> *"Education should be made more relevant to the needs of the economy"*
>
> (Hickox 1995, p153)

This method of education can be seen as underpinning the apprenticeship programme philosophies of Switzerland, Germany and Austria. These programmes are sponsored by government, private enterprise and unions and educate up to three-quarters of the relevant age cohort (Kempner et al, 1993, p375). The Germanic 'Dual System' (ie work and practical training with an employer and theoretical training in a vocational school) has worked well in offering sophisticated training which in most cases has provided well for the needs of the three economies. However this system is not without its critics, who are largely within the unions, and they express concerns over:

> *"The lowering of training standards, useless qualifications and above all the growing number of youth who can't get an adequate vocational training."*
>
> (Dehnbostel & Rau, 1986, cited in Kempner et al 1993, p376)

Unlike Germany, France and the United Kingdom have recently had a poor success rate in training large numbers of apprentices, whilst in the United States such training is used as a way of controlling supply of some trades, such as plumbers. The Unions usually operate apprenticeship programmes in America, and their offerings have little in common with the 'Dual System' or the UK/French systems. Because of the tight controls on entrance into apprenticeships, union programmes assure graduates of a job upon completion of their training.

> *"Students who cannot enter the union are then relegated to attending vocational programmes (often in community colleges) where, even though training and education may be superior, they do not win the 'card' that qualifies them for admission into the union and the accompanying benefits of membership."*
>
> (Kempner et al, 1993, p376)

This was paralleled and exemplified in the UK by the print unions in the 1950's and 60's.

Therefore apprenticeship programmes in the United States have not been well developed. This is partially due to their egalitarian attitude to society and partly due to the fact that they espouse the single track educational system which expects pupils to progress from junior high school to senior high school and then go on to university. Unlike Germany and Switzerland little kudos or prestige is given to 'blue collar' workers and their trades.

Corelli Barnett (1986) unfavourably compared the British educational system with that of Germany. He argued that Britain typically produced a small academic elite geared to employment in the civil service, whereas Germany, with its dualist system has underpinned the establishment of a highly skilled workforce suited to the needs of a dynamic modern economy. Hickox (1995) somewhat supports Barnett's assessment of British education as it applies to vocational education. He argues that the UK and countries like her have to face the choice of offering "cheap, lower value added products, using an unskilled workforce" where Britain is in direct competition with newly industrialising nations, and in a battle which is unlikely to be won, or for British industry to concentrate on high value added products for specialist markets, using highly skilled, well-trained labour. The collapse of the Asean economies has provided an opportunity for the UK to act upon this.

Matching with this change in direction, British education will have to become far more vocationally orientated, ensuring that the mass of school leavers are not left ill-equipped for the labour market by an elitist educational system which offers unsuitable knowledge and values. Hickox (1995, p158) explained that if this is not done:

> *". . . the tradition of low quality training associated with neo-liberalism will result in a 'low skills equilibrium' in which low-skill jobs and poor quality training become mutually reinforcing."*

Therefore, if we accept that vocational education is a preparatory stage for future employment, it is necessary to examine its origins and its place within the educational spectrum. The question can then be posed as to whether it is a tier of education within

its own right, a facet of the tertiary education system, or whether it transcends barriers and can be applicable at any level?

2.3 A Definition of Vocational Education

In discussing the issue of vocationalising education one is faced with the question of definition. According to Bacchus (1988), the term 'vocationalisation' refers to efforts by schools to include in their curriculum, those 'practical' subjects which are likely to give the students some basic knowledge, skills and concepts that might prepare them for work as skilled labourers or for work in the other manual occupations.

Alternatively, Sultana (1992, p11), sees vocational education in the same light as technical education, being 'applied' or 'practical' in nature and asserts that:

> *"The root of the distinction between vocational/technical on the one hand, and academic general on the other often has more to do with the distinction between 'hand' and 'mind', and with the differential prestige accorded to both in the labour market and culture generally."*

However, this distinction between general and vocational education shows more than class bias and a misconception or misunderstanding of the fundamentals of education. The fact that many educators have frequently highlighted the difference suggests that there must be something more important in the distinction between 'education' and 'training', which was first made by Aristotle. The latter term tends to be used synonymously with vocational courses, and both acquire a lesser status since practical training is largely considered to be aimed at developing technical skills, where performance at an ideal level is the goal, even if this efficiency excludes the understanding of the context in which that skill is practised.

Therefore the word 'vocational' has gained a variety of meanings. However, according to Bowman (1988, p151), the most misleading is the tendency to regard as 'vocationally' irrelevant, any education or training that is not specialised to particular sorts of work; what she cites as being usually labelled 'general' education. For surely such general education is an essential part of preparation for any vocation?

> *"Also distorted is the failure to recognise that at high levels 'academic' education may be and often has been distinctly 'vocational' (as it clearly was in preparation for the Foreign Service at Oxford and Cambridge in earlier years). Such preparation, however 'academic', is then vocationally specialised."*

Noah and Eckstein (1988), in their commentary upon business and industry involvement with education, explained that the most frequent criticism voiced against schools is that they provide inadequate and inappropriate preparation for entry into work. However, this has nothing to do with job specific skills but with the general lack of fundamental numeracy and literacy skills. From a memorandum submitted by the British Manpower Services Commission to a House of Commons Committee, the following was observed:

> *"There are a number of common specific points raised by employers in criticism of school curricula. A frequently heard concern is that the standard of school leavers' literacy and numeracy is well below what it should be. When pressed to be more specific about standards of literacy, employers point to illegible writing, limitations of vocabulary, weakness of grammar and syntax and poor presentation. Lack of facility in mathematical skills means that many school leavers are unable to cope with craft training without remedial education and this gives widespread cause for concern."*
>
> (Great Britain, House of Commons, 1984, p361, par 3.9 cited in Noah and Eckstein 1988, p 45/46).

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI 1981) pre-empted this Commons statement when they explained that they were in favour of the vocational elements

within the school curriculum, particularly in the later years of compulsory education. But they went on to state that they did not mean specific vocational courses as an entry into a particular trade or occupation, but a general vocational approach leading to a direction across the whole of school life which encourages the development of attitudes, skills and knowledge of relevance to adult society. Oxenham (1988, p69) concurs with the CBI's sentiments when he cites their response to the British Government's Green paper on Higher Education of 1986: in it they state:

> *"In selecting candidates, employers are placing more and more emphasis on personal qualities which cannot be taken for granted even of applicants with very good academic qualifications. The ability to communicate, both orally and in writing, together with good motivation, potential leadership qualities, breadth of outlook and a positive attitude to change, are obvious requirements alongside numeracy and specialist skills."*

There appears to be a dichotomy between what the education system is producing and what industry wants.

2.4 Linking Education with the Economy

As Lauglo and Lillis (1988, p4) explained, this philosophy of education was readily accepted and adopted by the United States of America, whose very being was originally founded on pragmatism.

> *"Curriculum thought in the United States has been profoundly influenced by pragmatism and its emphasis on the importance of 'useful' learning. Not only the American pragmatist philosophy of education - with Dewey as the main exponent - but also the utilitarian strain in American culture in general, along with populist scepticism of 'academic high culture, has reinforced the view that education should be as directly useful as possible."*

This idea of linking education and economy, for that is what pragmatic education implies, educating the masses so as to best maintain the 'business machine', received

further legitimisation from research and theoretical models, from such august persons as Drucker, Weisbrod and Schultz (Sultana, 1992). Their view was that the educational system must be treated as an industry generating the desired amount of functional manpower and that knowledge is the only real capital in modern times.

Support for practical subjects is found in the socialist concept of polytechnic education that is rooted in the Marxist theory of knowledge. As Lauglo and Lillis (1988) point out, there are some overlaps with pragmatism. One is rejection of dualism between 'theory' and 'practice', or pure and applied knowledge, and of educational superiority of the former. Similarly the concept of 'learning by doing' is also a basic concept of Marxist epistemology. However, whilst the pragmatist acknowledges the need for a blend between such 'theory' and 'practice', Marxism holds up the educative value of productive work, 'Education with Production'.

From a Marxist point of view, vocational education can also be seen as divisive, in that it creates a perceived level of hierarchy. This was recognised by Morris (1884) who stated that:

> "... *the education of the masters is more ornamental than that of the workmen, but it is commercial still.*"

Is the implication that vocationally educated students are going to gain 'blue collar' jobs ie will be the 'workers' whilst college or university students get the 'white collar' jobs and are 'the bosses'? Thus it can be viewed that vocational education is a way of giving the proletariat education, but at the same time keeping them in their place.

Pre-empting the Kennedy report of 1997 by more than a century William Morris (1884) noted that:

> *"Due education is a totally different thing from this, and concerns itself in finding out what different people are fit for, and helping them along the road which they are inclined to take. In a duly ordered society, therefore, young people would be taught such handicrafts as they had a turn for as part of their education, the discipline of their minds and bodies; and adults would also have opportunities of learning in the same schools, for the development of individual's capacities would be of all things chiefly aimed at by education, instead, as now, the subordination of all capacities to the great end of 'money making' for oneself - or one's master.*
>
> *The amount of talent, and even genius, which the present system crushes, and which would be drawn out by such a system, would make our daily work easy and interesting."*

This debate was taken up again, and has continued in the UK since the end of the Second World War. The various hues of government have attempted to address the vocational issue in a number of ways and via a number of initiatives including pre-vocational TVEI, GNVQ, etc and post compulsory education in the form of YTS, YOPs, TOPs and Modern Apprenticeships.

2.5 The Reasons for Vocationalising Education

Education policy makers still tend to believe that one of the major functions of schooling is the development among the young, of appropriate skills and attitudes, or competencies and commitments that are needed to make the economic system function more efficiently. Educational policy makers seem to take it as a self-evident truth, that if individuals in a society have the appropriate skills they will be more productive than without those skills. Following this line or argument the next step is for each policy maker to provide all of the perceived necessary skills for the students, so that they can acquire the preparation and techniques relevant to their society, which

would then ensure that those same students would become worthy contributors to the nation's economic development.

Previously in this chapter we saw the statement from the CBI which says that they were in favour of vocational education, particularly towards the end of the pupil's compulsory education. However, what if a vocational curriculum was to be introduced during the middle phase, or even earlier, of the pupils school career? Surely then they would be even more adept at a specific vocational skill? This would give those students who were not as at ease with a purist education, more self respect and at the same time ensure that they were adequately prepared ready for immediate employment when they eventually left school. Added to which they would be even further up the ladder of the job which they have chosen and as a consequence be of greater worth to both themselves, and the country or state. Further to this, it was suggested that the skills and attitudes that such individuals would develop, were likely to make them keener to enter the labour force even earlier and hence decrease the demand for more schooling (Bacchus, 1988). For less developed countries, this is a demand that many of them cannot afford to accommodate.

Conservative Prime Minister (1992-97) John Major's argument in favour of vocational education was that it would help to ensure a level of equality within society. With industry's constant quest for ever greater productivity, increasingly rigid systems were imposed upon the worker. Led by Taylor and his scientific approach to management, one saw the progressive dehumanisation of the worker to near automaton status. Wilms (1988) expressed the feeling of vocational educators when he wrote of how such education was seen as a way of promoting equality of

opportunity by providing all students with the chance for industrial training. Such industrial training would also help working people to gain control over their own lives through economic self-sufficiency. It was even suggested, as long ago as 1915, that vocational education would create a skilled workforce that could not be ignored and that, as the worker became so skilled, the employers would become more dependent upon the work force, thus forcing them to include the work force in the decision-making aspects of the company.

> *"As long as the worker is poorly trained, as long as he is an inefficient factor in production and his place is easily filled, he can be dominated through fear of losing a poor job. Let the worker become a skilled artisan or let him through combination of co-operation gain control of the supply of the product that he has to sell, then he becomes a potent factor in determining hours, wages and working conditions. Moreover, as soon as he becomes a skilled worker, his power and importance as a citizen are enhanced and he begins to tamper with the machinery at the source of his master's political strength."*
>
> (Lapp and Mote, 1915 cited in Wilms, 1988).

This had been true in post war Britain up until the advent of the Thatcher Government. Following her election there was a major change of emphasis and a return to a form of control over the workers. It will be interesting to see whether the 'New Labour' Government will make changes to the vocational education system to ameliorate this.

A final reason why vocational education appears to make good sense is because the rate of return on investment in the vocational student is higher than the purely academic student. The vocational student is likely to find employment more quickly, is less likely to become unemployed, is less demanding of their working conditions and, as has been previously explained, he/she can immediately assist in benefiting the national economy.

The measurement of success of education has often been difficult to define, especially by pragmatic industrialists who want employees who can 'do' rather that 'think'. Vocational education gives them the opportunity to be quite exact as to whether or not the educational system is performing to 'scratch' and meeting their needs. One example of this was highlighted in a press release of July 1997, by the then president, Gary Hawkes, of the British Hospitality Association (BHA), who represents the majority of large hospitality employers. The title of the article was 'Hospitality Education Needs More Practical Training'.

At a lunch addressing members of parliament and over 200 employers Hawkes stated:

> *". . . in the areas of hospitality training and vocational education, colleges and universities were abandoning practical skills training in favour of desk-bound studies."*

Hawkes also stated that:

> *"Colleges and universities have abandoned quality controlled Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in favour of degrees and this has led to academic drift, driven by the need of universities to sell places and attract students and of simple economics."*

Hawkes was very critical of the government proposals to reduce the unit of resource for hospitality degrees from £5,200 to £3,900 per year.

The President was also concerned that:

> *". . . to meet these new cost restrictions, the costly but vital practical skills training element will be reduced or, worse, done away with."*

He went on further in his speech to compare the model for UK vocational education in hospitality subjects with that of Switzerland, Holland and France. He believes that the UK should learn from them by offering double the number of contact hours per week on programmes and over 50% more time on practical skills. Comments from a variety of individuals and organisations have posited that the present model of vocational degrees in hospitality management is not meeting the needs of employers, because the graduate is not fully prepared for the role in employment.

2.6 Recent Changes in Vocational Education

In 1986 the then Conservative Government established a new vocational qualification framework. A mandate was given to a new body, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ), to develop systems and procedures for a qualifying process that would not only have national application, but which was intended eventually to cover all occupations, at all levels. The developments over the subsequent 12 years have generated a plethora of reports, comments and criticisms in respect of the developments so far. One of the main features of these reports is a notable lack of knowledge and enthusiasm for the framework on the part of potentially powerful participants, as discussed below.

A great deal of criticism has been expressed from professional organisations, whose practice was steeped in history and tradition. By comparison with NCVQ, that history and tradition provided well-established components of the professionalising process to which members were subjected.

The introduction of NCVQ clearly represented more than the criteria for a new set of vocational qualifications, it represented a whole new way of thinking: new ways of structuring educational organisations, new ways of determining curriculum content curriculum delivery and assessment.

Many articles written by professionals and academics appeared in the education press voicing their concerns. These expressions of concern fell into two broad categories. First, those which reflected the interests and traditional functions of the professions. This category included an expressed concern for the public interest. Second those that reflected concerns about optimum models of education, learning and assessment. This category included a concern for the ways in which the professional model of practice was reflected in these activities. It included a concern for the interface between theory and practice (education and training).

One professional, representing the Royal Institute of British Architects, felt so strongly about what was happening that he expressed his views thus:

> *"A quasi-professional structure is being designed to marginalise the professions. This is the most serious threat to the professions in their chartered existence. The NVQ system is designed to render professionals redundant and their professional institutes obsolete."*
>
> (Smith 1995, p27)

He also specified the functions for which, in his view, the Chartered Institute of which he was a member was responsible. Critically, concern for the public interest was addressed in terms of the accountability which members had for their personal actions in relation to the client group. The Institute was also responsible for a disciplinary function by which members could be expelled for negligence or misconduct.

Personal accountability was upheld through these functions. Quite as important, the terms of membership of the professional body required that "members of a professional body submit to a code of ethics which transcends common law" (Smith 1995, p27).

These concerns were followed in quick succession by articles from other professionals. Speaking of engineering and manufacturing, Sparkes (1995, p6) opinioned that "standards of literacy, science and mathematics had dropped to the extent that it was unwise to perpetuate them by enshrining them in NVQs." With an eye to the future, the writer also spoke of the need for innovation:

> *"In engineering and manufacturing, where innovation is essential for prosperity, it makes no sense to award NVQs at the higher levels for no more than current 'competences'. While NVQs may enable us to deal with yesterday's problems, and even with some of today's, they leave us helpless when faced with tomorrow's. We will find we have created a 'third-world workforce' rather than the intended 'world-class workforce."*

In spite of these criticisms, there was a certain acceptance of NVQs at the lower craft and technical levels. Whether this acceptance reflected the fact that craft qualifications had developed their own ethos, which was separate from the professional qualification often developed within the higher education sector, and whether it reflected a willingness to perpetuate dichotomies in education and employment terms, are moot points. Whatever the reasons, the representative from the Royal Institute of British Architects wrote as follows:

> *"Is the introduction of NVQs in the public interest? (the Government justification). The answer is 'yes' up to a level 3 but 'no' when it comes to professional qualifications."*
>
> (Smith 1995, p5)

In parallel to protest from professional bodies, came protests from the education sector. Writing from the University of Sunderland School of Education, at the time of the publication of the Government White Paper, 'Competitiveness' in May, 1995, Ecclestone (1995) highlighted the additional emphasis made in that paper on the proposals for NVQs to be adopted as higher, professional qualifications. Her concerns revolve around the 'bureaucratic prescriptiveness' (op cit) of NVQs and the ways in which that prescriptiveness might affect learning. In addition, Ecclestone (1995, p3-4) spoke of knowledge and understanding and their relationship to continuing professional development:

> *"It is by no means clear... that gearing professional qualifications to the acquisition of NVQ of competence will result in the type of learning experiences and worthwhile assessment processes which will motivate people to undertake updating and continuing development... there are some functions and aspects of learning the NVQ simply cannot capture."*

Negative comments were expressed with the immediacy made available through the medium of the weekly-produced education press. They were followed by a spate of reports: Beaumont Report (1996): Capey Report (NCVQ, 1995): Institute of Employment Studies (Spilsbury et al, 1995). These Government-commissioned reports, published at the end of 1995, substantiated earlier concerns of that year with evidence of their own. Critical activity did not stop there. Very critical reports, emanating from academic institutions (Eraut et al, 1996; Robinson, 1996), followed. The evidence pointed to a failure of the new framework to convince industry and educational professionals of its efficacy.

Particular criticism focused on the methodology underpinning NVQs. Based on functional analysis and criterion-referenced assessment, the origins of the

methodology had a history in teacher training in the United States (Wolf, 1995). Critics, writing of this history, identified the failure of the methodology to answer the needs of professional education and assessment (Hyland, 1994; Wolf, 1995). Nonetheless, the methodology was implemented wholesale in the competency-based model generated in the UK

Not only were competency-based approaches considered to be fragmentary and bureaucratic in their implementation (Hyland, 1994; Wolf, 1995), but their ability to reflect the competence, to learn and develop for future competence and to relate to the changing needs of a given profession, was called into question. Ethical, moral and value-laden issues, which many professions had hitherto written into their codes of practice, clearly needed careful consideration. The lack of addressing of professional issues was highlighted by competency-based assessment techniques, which relied heavily on the observation of performance.

2.7 Why the Change to Competency Based Education?

In the 1980's, a sequence of events was politically in the foreground as part of a new national move to make vocational education and training competency-based. The publication of 'A New Training Initiative' (1981) by the Department of Employment heralded a train of further publications. There followed White Papers with a similar theme: 'Training for Jobs' (DoE, DES, 1984); 'Education and Training for Young People' (DoE, DES, 1985); 'Working Together: Education and Training' (DoE, DES, 1986).

The publication of the latter White Paper gave rise to the inauguration of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) in 1986. The Council's remit was, notably, to design and implement a new national framework of vocational qualifications which would ultimately cover *all* occupational sectors at all levels (Hyland, 1994, p5; Wolf, 1995, p17).

The main reasons expressed for establishing a body such as NCVQ, were that economically, the UK was considered to be falling behind other developed countries such as the United States, Germany and Japan (Wolf, 1995, p7) and emerging economies, such as those of the Pacific Rim. Participation rates in the education of young people between the ages of 16 to 19 were low in published international league tables, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) 1994. Factors such as the UK recession and radical changes in the traditional apprenticeship system (Wolf, 1995, p11) also played their part.

The Government's response was not simply to publish in the 1980s the series of White Papers identified here, but also to adopt a reform strategy which would depend heavily on the participation of employers. In particular, the White Paper, 'Employment for the 1990s' (DES, 1988) required that new employer-led organisations, called 'lead bodies' should be established and funded by the Employment Department (Wolf, 1995, p15), with the aim of identifying and establishing standards for their occupational sectors.

The proposed function of lead bodies was specified by a specialist paper, 'Lead Bodies for the 1990s' (Employment Department, 1991):

> *"The main function of a Lead Body is to define the competencies required in employment - what is necessary to do the work successfully. Within an occupational area ... they are responsible for identifying the standards at all levels to the most senior professional and managerial, and agreeing with the National Council for Vocational Qualifications and the Scottish Vocational Education Council a framework of vocational qualifications. Commonality across occupations is to be achieved and maintained through liaison consortia (for example, the Hospitality Training Foundation)."*

Prior to the establishment of these Lead Bodies the hospitality industry professional body the Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management Association (HCIMA) was responsible for the Corpus of Knowledge required in Hospitality Management Programmes.

This section has shown that there has been a radical Thatcherite driven shift in the concept of professionalism. From the professional point of view there was a limited acceptance of the NVQ system at the lower levels (operational levels) but generally no acceptance that the NVQ would replace the higher level skills and cognitive abilities of the professional qualification, nor reset the ethical and cultural base laid by the professions. The educational debate therefore moves forward to consider the role of the graduate, and indeed graduateness, as perceived by the various players: government, professions, industry and education.

It was acknowledged that this is set in a time of change, with a New World economic situation and a new labour government, with new priorities. Hence this thesis will attempt to provide, as up to date an analysis of the situation as is possible given these constraints.

2.8 The Concept of 'Graduateness'

From the autumn of 1994 onwards, the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) has, at the request of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) been undertaking an exploration both of the academic standards of first degrees in UK higher education (HE) and of the means by which these might be articulated and assured. This work was entitled the 'Graduate Standards Programme' (GSP). The findings of the first stage of the GSP suggest that a growing number of people considered that it would be valuable to explore further, the attributes which are denoted by the award of the UK first degree ie, the attributes that constitute what has come to be called 'graduateness'. The interim report prepared by the GSP, published in December 1995 stated during their consultations that the award of a degree should signify at least three kinds of achievement. These could be characterised as:

Field Specific

- the possession of a body of knowledge and other qualities particular to the fields studied.

Shared

- the possession of certain more general attributes that might be common to graduates from families of degrees, whether associated by cognate subject matter and/or approach (such as life sciences or the performing arts), or by some other means.

Generic

- the possession of yet more general attributes, which might be common to all or most graduates.

This project concentrated primarily on the latter two forms of achievement. It sets out to identify what attributes were expected of graduates across all hospitality degree programmes (or clusters of them) and how these attributes might be defined and their possession assessed. In addition to the achievement mentioned above, the award of a degree can also, in certain cases, carry with it a 'licence to practise' in a particular profession or contribute towards a professional qualification. That characteristic however, did not fall within the primary focus of the HEQC's work on 'graduateness', the purpose of which was to capture what academics regarded as the essential attributes of a graduate and what might be termed 'fitness for award'. The relationship of degrees to professional qualification might in contrast, be termed 'fitness to practice'.

The terms 'graduate' and 'bachelors degree' have been in use since the Middle Ages, so why examine graduateness now? The interim report of the GSP identified a number of reasons:

- the growth in HE over the last 10 years;
- the large-scale introduction of modular programmes, causing problems with assessment and comparability;
- new subjects have entered HE in areas not previously offered to degree level and some of these have difficulties in defining their own understandings of graduateness;
- the diversity of types of programme of study now available has increased, thus enabling students to gain a degree through many different kinds of learning experiences;

- the growth of collaborative work including franchising (sometimes overseas), reinforcing the need for clarity about the concept of 'graduateness' being shared;
- a move towards a greater diversity of entry qualifications for programmes;
- the growing internationalisation of higher education has made it more important to clarify the standards of UK degrees, in relation to other countries.

The generic qualities expected of graduates have sometimes been described as 'core skills', 'key skills', 'personal transferable skills' or, even 'employment related skills'. These terms have originated largely outside HE as ways of expressing the needs of employers, professional bodies or of society more generally.

The idea that graduates should be expected to possess certain qualities as a consequence of their experience of higher education has a long ancestry. In the 1850's, John Henry Newman distinguished such attributes as being able "to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant . . . to fill any post with credit and to master any subject with facility." These, he wrote, equipped a graduate to "accommodate himself to other . . . to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them", . . . to be at home in any society . . . [to have] common ground with every class . . . [to know] when to speak and when to be silent...to ask a question pertinently . . . [to] be able to converse and gain a lesson seasonably . . . [and to enjoy] the repose of a mind that lives in itself, while it lives in

the world" (Newman 1986, p135 [lectures originally presented in 1825]). It is not surprising that over a century later, the Robbins report defined the purpose of HE as being not simply the "instruction of skills to play in the general division of labour" and "the advancement of learning" (HMSO 1963, p6). It would therefore seem that in the turbulent world of the hospitality industry of the 1990's, graduates would need skills and competencies over and above the basic skills to 'do the job'. The following section now turns to consider, from a number of viewpoints, whether the educational institutions are meeting these new requirements.

2.9 Are Higher Education Institutions Meeting Industry Needs?

It is open to question as to whether degrees can be trusted any longer. Some worrying stories about university examining practices are surfacing in the media. Employers tell us that they increasingly have to turn to A-levels for reliable information about ability.

Some of the education press have accused Sir Ron Dearing of being a doubter. The review of higher education, which he chaired, has recommended a beefed-up Quality Assurance Agency, to be responsible for introducing and maintaining a qualification framework, verifying standards and providing quality assurance and public information.

The main flaw in Sir Ron's argument is that what he envisages, rests on a number of abstract concepts that some consider difficult to put into practice. The proposal for a qualifications framework assumes that it is straightforward to assign level and credit across a wide range of studies both academic and vocational. The proposal for

standards assumes that all learning can be expressed as outcomes that can be stated clearly and unambiguously, when the experience of National Vocational Qualification is quite different.

The positive endorsement that Dearing (1997) has given to what universities are traditionally committed to, has been welcomed by most institutions, but it also heightens their responsibility to take the report recommendations for the future seriously. Young (1997) cites the report as being:

> *" . . . evolutionary rather than revolutionary, and heavily underlines trends that have already been gathering momentum."*

The Dearing report envisages the creation of a society committed to learning throughout life. The future he outlines requires British universities, amongst other things:

- to enable all students to achieve beyond their expectations;
- to safeguard standards;
- to be at the leading edge of the world practice in effective learning and teaching.

To facilitate the aim of lifelong learning and continuous professional development (CPD), a framework of qualifications is recommended to enable employers to know how NVQ, Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNCs & HNDs) and degree levels are related and to permit students to move from one track to another. Threshold standards are to be defined to effect this. This will reinforce the need for consistent credit accumulation and transfer systems (CATS) across the FE and HE sectors. The value of HE will lie in the skills that it develops. Many students will be employed in

jobs that may not require the specific subject knowledge that they have acquired, but will need flexibility, lateral thinking, knowing how to learn, how to communicate and how to work in teams. Thus, we find that the old idea that 'studying for a degree trains the mind', is found in a new guise. Dearing identified four key skills that should be embedded as far as possible in all degree programmes: communication skills, numeracy, information technology (IT) skills and 'learning to learn'. But the range of skills is clearly wider than that. All this reinforces the search to define 'graduateness' and the attempt to address the issue of standards. HE institutions with degree awarding powers responsible for the quality and standards of their own awards, will need to articulate, not least for the benefit of the students, what their standard is, what criteria they will use to assess it, how they have embedded the transferable skills into the HE programmes and what will be the outcomes of the educational experience. Furthermore, the Quality Assurance Agency, whom many believe will become more prescriptive, will audit all of this against the institution's self-assessment. One way in which these aims may be achieved is by returning to the concept of the apprenticeship, but instead of the traditional craft apprenticeship, the focus has moved to provide graduate and postgraduate apprenticeships, but for the traditional reasons.

2.10 Graduate Apprenticeships

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) has a major interest in strengthening the relationship between HE and employment, and issues of graduate employability. The Enterprise in HE initiative provided pump-priming funds to improve the responsiveness of HE to the needs of the labour market and help employers to make better use of the skills and knowledge which graduates bring to the

workplace. The National Committee of Inquiry into HE (The Dearing Report) has emphasised the importance of increased interaction between the two sectors.

Research and development projects have examined the barriers to graduate recruitment for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), where the majority of graduates must now expect to find work (this is very true of hospitality graduates). Findings (eg HCTC, NCER) consistently cite the cost of recruitment and support in the initial stages of employment as a significant barrier. Evidence from the National Training Organisation (NTO) network shows that even those graduating with degrees purporting to relate to work in particular industries frequently lack the relevant vocational skills they need to become rapidly economically productive.

Employers continue to press for HE to become more relevant and responsive to the needs of the labour market. Many, particularly SMEs, are reluctant to recruit graduates, especially where such graduates are only at the start of their professional development. Many of these businesses miss out on the opportunity to take part in the process of enhancing the skill level and productivity of the work force. An anecdotal example of this was the personnel manager of a well known five-star hotel who, when interviewed, expressed the opinion that it was not worth her while paying to train staff who would then be poached by other organisations. She preferred to be the poacher herself.

While National Traineeships and Modern Apprenticeships now attempt to address skills needs at NVQ levels one, two and three of the national framework, NTOs

perceive a gap in work-related skills provision at the higher levels (levels four and five).

Current research is being undertaken into the feasibility of implementing graduate apprenticeships, partly sponsored by the DfEE. This research is being led by Professor David Bartram of the University of Hull. The briefing note issued in late November 1997 states that the aim of this research is to:

> "*. . . explore the concept of a structured higher level vocational and professional development route which is more directly tailored to the needs of industry and the professions, linked to HE provision.*"

Many of the NTO's are keen, in this respect, to develop and enhance partnerships between industry, the professional bodies and HE. Five NTOs have reacted positively to these proposals and they include:

Media and Publishing

Sports and Recreation

Information Technology

Personnel, Training and Trade Union

Psychology and Analytical Chemistry

(notably the hospitality industry is not represented here)

The feasibility study being undertaken by Bartram et al will concentrate on two models:

1. **Undergraduate** - this will be a work-based 'apprenticeship' combining with HE. This could be an existing qualification like a degree or HND, or a new course devised by both parties for this purpose. The advantages of this model is that the student will enjoy employed status throughout his studies, the employer

will pay all costs to the HE provider and the graduate will emerge with both academic and applied skills which should make him/her highly employable. The institution being studied for this thesis strongly believes in the integration of work-based and college-based experiences, and it may be argued that this pre-empts Bartram's study.

2. **Postgraduate** - this will link a postgraduate qualification (Diploma or Masters degree) with work experience with an employer or employers. Such courses will be predominantly designed and delivered by HE providers with professional body accreditation. This could be similar to the Teaching Company Scheme. Indeed it could be questioned how Bartram's idea is actually any different from the already successful Teaching Company Scheme.

Nevertheless, it will be interesting to see what the outcome will be from these studies and whether the findings will form the basis for the development of an overall graduate apprenticeship framework, which will forge a better working relationship between the academic /industrial divide.

2.11 The Professional Body Working for Hospitality Management

Thinking and acting on behalf of another person is a complex aspect of professional responsibility. It is an aspect that generates concerns of an ethical and moral nature. A profession ideally develops understandings of these concerns. The process by which that understanding is developed and integrated into the education and assessment of initiatives to a profession, is one way in which a profession expresses its values.

Examples of literature published by statutory and professional bodies and circulated to their members, evidence a wish to strengthen the expression of these values. Such literature also serves as an encouragement to practitioners to assimilate the values as part of their day-to-day practice. For example the HCIMA published in 1974 'Tomorrow's Managers,' 1977 'Corpus of Knowledge' and is at present producing a new 'Corpus of Management Excellence' 1998. The 'Corpus of Management Excellence' has been developed since early 1997 and it involved considerable consultation and discussion with over two hundred employer groups and educators from Europe. The objective of this 'Corpus of Management Excellence' is to provide guidance to universities, colleges and schools about curriculum development, course design and assessment. It attempts to encapsulate the nature and breadth of the hospitality industry and emphasise the need for specific industry-focused programmes.

The research report summary of the Corpus (1998) states:

> *". . . our brief was to develop a revised body of knowledge in order to create a benchmark against which the programme development and achievement of each individual working within the industry or studying within this vocational specialism might be measured . . ."*

They go on to illustrate that personal and professional development should include the following themes:

- Competence
- Outcomes
- Modularity
- Assessment
- Key Skills
- Career Progression
- Employability Skills
- Graduateness

Many of these themes developed by the HCIMA are similar to those that the GSP and the Dearing Committee identified as important skills necessary for graduateness.

The HCIMA are adopting this competency profile as a 'benchmark' and they will systematically evaluate hospitality management programmes available worldwide against these competencies. If a programme fulfils all of the criteria it will carry their 'kitemark', enabling graduates to apply for corporate membership after two years of relevant supervisory/management experience.

Many other employer organisations are taking graduateness seriously and are producing similar graduate profiles, an example of this being illustrated in a recent copy of the Daily Telegraph:

Schofield (1998) when referring to graduate skills:

> *". . . in return for hard work and loyalty, employees had job security and opportunities for career development. But employers have broken this contract. Today jobs for life are endangered, if not extinct. Flatter hierarchies limit promotion opportunities. Employers now expect employees to be responsible for their own career development."*

The consequence is that managers need a range of new skills to adapt to a fast-changing world. They must commit themselves to a process of life-long learning, not only to meet the evolving needs of their current employment, but also to be ready for any unavoidable change of employer or role.

Schofield (1998) also identified that:

> *"In general, employers have no difficulty in finding sufficient graduates with academic skills which reach their particular benchmark. But what they are*

looking for more and more is personal transferable skills on top of the academic ability to make them more employable."

Schofield (1998) refers to two sets of skills required by graduates (which were produced by the Institute of Employment Studies) which are the Managers' Skills and the Graduates' Skills.

Managers' Skills (In no particular order)

- Taking responsibility for own development
- Computer literacy
- Interpersonal skills
- Communication techniques
- Languages
- Team work
- Negotiation
- Financial management

Source: Graduate Salaries and Vacancies, summer update 1997 (Institute for Employment Studies), The Qualified Manager (Institute of Management and Ashridge).

Graduates' Skills (In order of priority)

- Motivation and enthusiasm
- Interpersonal skills, team working
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Oral communications
- Initiative and proactive
- Problem solving, planning and organisation
- Numeracy
- Innovation and imagination
- Ability to manage own learning and development
- Written communications
- Time management
- Customer orientation
- Leadership
- Business awareness

Source: Graduate Salaries and Vacancies, summer update 1997 (Institute for Employment Studies).

The Graduate Recruitment Employers' Survey undertook research to distinguish what skills graduates should have. They surveyed a sample of over 10,000 recruitment employers and came up with the following list:

1	Oral Communication	2	Teamwork
3	Enthusiasm	4	Motivation
5	Initiative	6	Leadership
7	Commitment	8	Interpersonal Skills
9	Organising	10	Foreign Language Competency

The conclusion overall was that graduates need four types of skills to give 'Graduateness', namely:

SPECIALIST: being an expert at something (eg design, software applications etc).

SELF-RELIANT: being able to manage their career and personal development requiring confidence, self-awareness and action planning.

CONNECTED: being able to be a team player requiring management skills, negotiation skills and presentation skills.

GENERALIST: having general business knowledge including basic accounting, written communication, use of IT and the ability to solve problems.

They also recommend that graduates undertake a self-assessment of their skills and abilities and be aware of their shortcomings. They should then address these shortcomings and produce evidence, to support their applications for posts.

2.12 Developing Graduateness in Hospitality Management Courses

Umbreit (1992) in the United States commented that hospitality educators must take a lead in providing their students with a relevant curriculum for the 1990's and beyond. He advocated six key area of curriculum development, namely:

- Leadership
- Human resource management
- Services marketing
- Financial analysis
- Total quality management
- Communication skills

Robinson (1992, pp40-45) advocated graduates with a greater familiarity with food and beverage skills (both service and preparation) and with computerised front-office skills. Robinson was concerned that courses were becoming increasingly academic rather that practical. The conflict between academic and practical skills was described by Purcell & Quinn (1994) in that universities have been accused of providing courses that are too theoretical and do not develop sufficient practical skills.

Ladki (1993 pp243-251) said, however,

> *"In a University setting, hospitality education aspires to be a professional/ academic discipline in an environment that has responsibilities."*

Powers (1980 pp41-43) in the United States said that hospitality managers need education in three areas namely; technical, human and conceptual. He observed that European hotel schools followed a much more craft orientated curriculum, whilst the majority of American hospitality schools were management orientated. Experience would suggest that UK educational institutions lean towards the North American model far more than the European.

Messenger (1991) maintained that hospitality educators must move away from developing standard courses, towards producing individual learning and assessment programmes especially for groups like women returners and older people. Given the manpower shortage of the hospitality industry, and demographic changes with an ageing population, it is possible that although Messenger carried out her study in 1991, her findings are still relevant today. Many hospitality departments in educational institutions are addressing this issue by fast-track programmes, accrediting people for life skills and previous educational profile.

This contradicts what many universities secretly fear, (Personal Communications 1998) that the HE funding bodies and the QAA are aiming towards implementing a national curriculum for universities, implying that this would reduce their academic freedom.

2.13 Linking Business with Hospitality Education

> *"The fit between products of the UK hospitality education industry and the hospitality industry has been the subject of extensive controversy. Neither the industry nor educators can afford to be complacent about wastage of highly qualified recruits."*
>
> Purcell & Quinn (1994 pp1-2)

To overcome considerable negative relationships between educators and industry, Robinson (1992, pp40-45) called for greater liaison between colleges and industry. She believed that part of the problem was a lack of communication between educationalists and employers over what employers are looking for. Messenger (1991) felt that industry should be encouraged to decide curriculum content and that

there should be increased partnership between education and industry. In particular she felt that modern foreign languages should be a compulsory element in the curriculum. Foskett (1991, pp149-150) looked towards the future and felt the industry's involvement in education would become more and more important, as the survival of hospitality degree education ultimately depends on meeting the customer's needs. Foskett (1991, pp149-150) suggested making education far more accountable to its industry with more involvement and responsibility placed upon professional managers and representatives from within the industry.

> *"The future of hospitality education is dependent on the industry which benefits from it."*

However, personal observation suggests that a problem exists with some sectors of the hospitality industry, in that they are not interested or cannot be bothered to take a productive role in what education provides.

Gamble (1992, pp6-10) also added to the debate about greater co-operation and saw it as important in widening the perspective of individual learners.

> *"Essentially this involves a broadening of delivery systems and a widening of access to education and training."*

In the light of the above literature, curriculum change and the development of a new profile of management competences, the writer will undertake research to identify the impact these changes have had on graduates from one institution. The aim of the research is to identify the level of preparedness, in relation to the skills identified earlier, they have received on their degree programme for the work place. It will also determine the relevance of the programme's curriculum relative to the graduate's

intellectual development, and their preparation for a position in the hospitality industry, now and into the millennium.

With the advent of current and proposed innovation in hospitality degree programmes Martin (1997) p.314 states:

> *". . . two distinct types of managers can now be found working in UK hotels. The first or traditional approach emphasised vocational training and technical competence and rates 'mine host' skills of primary importance. The second is the more modern manager, formally qualified in management. This group rates pure business management skills above mine host skills."*

The graduate sample selected for this research has undertaken a programme of study where greater than 75 per cent of the taught programme concentrated on business management skills ie a US style of programme, as implied previously. The vocational, technical and 'mine host' skills referred to by Martin were included in the remaining 25 per cent plus exposure during a work placement of 48 weeks.

This research will concentrate on the views of new graduates to the industry who should have a fresh perspective. It is envisaged that the results will be rich and hopefully will identify the students to be open-minded, lively in their outlook and forward looking. Their views are very important as these ex-graduates are the managers of the future whose views are pertinent both to the future of the industry and for the development and maintenance of relevant hospitality management education programmes.

2.14 Summary

The first part of this chapter has reviewed Hospitality Management Education as an entity in the context of vocational education. It has reviewed the changing scene in the vocational education system, taking account of the arguments, political, industrial and educational, which have led to the current UK position.

The second part of this chapter considered the concept of 'graduateness' and reviews the discussions that have shaped the development of our current understanding of the concept. It went on to consider graduateness as it might apply to Hospitality Management education and how it may be important for the future growth and development of the individual in their employment role for the future.

The next chapter sets out the research methods and research design which were used for the empirical study that is the focus of this report.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS AND STUDY DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapters have reviewed the literature relating to significant factors that have affected hospitality management education. The literature review identified the historical development of hospitality management education, in line with changes that have taken place with vocational education in the UK. It has also focused on some of the recent initiatives that have affected higher education and in particular hospitality management degree programmes.

This chapter describes in detail the methodology adopted for this particular inquiry and informs the analysis and method of data collection. Hall (1996, p17) stresses the importance of the research design:

> *"The test question for any academic discussion which claims to based on research findings is whether the conclusions are justified by the research design."*

The next section begins with a discussion of the theoretical orientation for the study, which informs the research design; this is followed with a critical review of the methods of data collection and attempts to show the appropriateness of the methods for the topic being researched.

3.1 Theoretical Orientation

Richardson (1991, p173) argues that there:

> *". . . is doubt that any discourse has a privileged place and method of theory a universal and general claim to authoritative knowledge."*

There is a need nevertheless to select an appropriate approach for the research problem. Appropriateness is contingent on a large number of variables, not least of which is the nature of the problem itself and the theoretical base or principles, which guide choice. Such principles are formed from basic ontological and epistemological convictions which Guba & Lincoln (1994, p108) suggest should be challenged prior to the inquirer going about "finding out whatever he or she believes can be known". It is not the intention here to explore fully the metaphysics of alternative inquiry paradigms, rather to take account of Richardson's assertion of no one 'best method', to address the ontological and epistemological principles which inform the approach taken.

Smith & Heshius (1986) announce their concern, echoing Bryman (1984), that misconceptualisations about the difference between method and methodology lead to misconceptions about what is achievable, practical and suitable for a particular research design. They propound that method may be taken as technique, a 'set of tools' which the researcher may employ to collect and analyse data, (questionnaire, survey, interview, observation) which they say is acceptable. But, methodology involves assumptions about the nature of the world, of reality and truth. One may talk of a positivistic methodology, but whether one can talk of a 'positivistic method' is a question that will be addressed here as such implies that methods, or tools, are 'aligned' to a particular viewpoint or paradigm.

The advice of Hughes & Sharrock (1997,p5) is that it is necessary for philosophical issues to be regarded as the preliminary ones that need to be addressed in order that sound methods for enquiry can be laid down in advance of the empirical work (results based on study, observation etc, as opposed to the results of pure reasoning). The term 'philosophical' may be a broad and contentious term. However, in the context of this research, it will be used to discern the underpinning beliefs and assumptions behind the use of method: it will be used to refer to the methodological research issues that will be addressed.

There is a need to address at this juncture the term paradigm. Easterby-Smith et al (1992) tell that a new paradigm, phenomenology - which has arisen during the last half century, largely in reaction to the application of positivism to the social sciences - stems from the view that the world and 'reality' are not objective and exterior, but that they are socially constructed and given meaning by people, as propounded by (Husserl 1946).

For Kuhn (1977), most of the time, scientists exhibit a strong attachment to general frameworks or 'paradigms', which contain a 'constellation' of beliefs, cognitions, rules of order and techniques of procedure. Paradigms involve a shared set of symbols and values, as well as criteria of judgements and the work done (Hughes & Sharrock 1997 pp81-82). For Kuhn, the change in paradigm amounts to a gestalt fluctuation in which things can never be the same as before. A new paradigm is a new way of seeing the same 'things' differently, and the kind of phenomena with which a discipline deals, with changes quite fundamentally.

The aim here is, firstly, not to use Kuhn's term lightly. Indeed, the shift, for some, from the rigid positivistic insistence of objectivity reality and social 'wholes' to subjective reality and the primary importance of social interaction, was a major paradigmatic shift in the view of human experience and social reality. Secondly, for the reasons outlined above, there is a need to recognise the obvious; that one may not alternate from one paradigm to another. One cannot research within positivism and phenomenology or one of its derivatives.

Gouldner (1971, pp50-51) argues,

> *"Viewed from one standpoint methodology seems a purely technical concern devoid of ideology...It is a good deal more than that, for it is commonly infused with ideology resonant with assumptions about what the social world is, and what the nature of the relation between them is."*

The researcher must be aware of the assumptions on which his own perspective is based. Exploring these assumptions confronts us with problems of ontology, epistemology and human nature. Assumptions of an ontological nature concern the very essence of the phenomena being studied; is reality given in one's world or a product of one's mind? Associated with the ontological is another set of assumptions of an epistemological nature, assumptions about the nature of knowledge. There are also assumptions about the nature of human existence, ranging from the belief that we have a free will to a more preconditioned view of human nature. These three sets of assumptions have a direct implication for the methods of research adopted.

> *"Different ontologies, epistemologies and models of human nature are likely to incline social scientists towards different methodologies."*
>
> (Burrell & Morgan 1979, p2)

When considering the basic research methodologies in social sciences, McNeill (1985, p108) suggests that the fundamental debate lies between positivism (quantitative) and phenomenology (qualitative). These will be addressed below.

3.1.1 *Positivism*

McNeill (1985, p41) describes positivism as a philosophical concept which refers to

> *". . . a particular set of assumptions about the world and about appropriate ways of studying it . . ."*

It is acknowledged that this is also true of phenomenology, but the set of assumptions is different. In the positivist context as described by McNeill, the discovered knowledge is assumed to be objective and factual and can be used to make predictions about what will happen in the natural world.

Marx and Durkheim followed this approach, developing positivist sociology, which assumes that laws exist which govern the operations of the social world. NcNeill (p109) claims that the positivist approach to study of the social world, based on the hypothetico-deductive method in order to produce objective data, represented the sociologists' desire to establish their discipline in the academic world.

This approach, which fitted with the researcher's initial perceived frame of reference, seeks to provide hard, objective data based on the assumption that 'facts' lie 'out there', untouched by us, to which a range of analyses and comparison can be subsequently applied. However, in seeking to identify and understand the work of Hospitality Managers and, in particular the demands, conflicts and diversity within that work, the researcher recognised the limitations of using solely the positivist approach. Specifically, these limitations related to the difficulty of handling the

complexity of their work through statistics and the concealment by the data of the richness of their experience. Real people and their work settings cannot be explored and described solely in terms of objective data and the associated statistics, although quantification of some aspects of the work can be useful.

3.1.2 *Phenomenology*

Contrary to the positivist philosophy are phenomenology and interpretative sociology, which recognise individuals as active, conscious beings, aware of what is going on and capable of making choices (McNeill 1985, p212). Underpinning this philosophy is an acceptance of the need to understand social situations and actions in the way the participants do and the pursuance of constructed shared meanings and interpretations. Bulmer (1984, p212) recognises that phenomenology has a richness, colour and depth of description not found in a positivistic paradigm.

Spradley (1980, pvii) suggests that, despite the inherent difficulties, phenomenology represents an exciting enterprise which reveals what people think and offers the opportunity to step outside of narrow cultural constraints. Purists argue that phenomenology and positivism are opposing philosophies and as such, cannot become intertwined. The researcher, starting from a positivist perspective, increasingly sought the richness which derives from a phenomenological approach, whilst accepting that total movement to this position was not possible. Therefore, it will involve fluctuating between paradigms.

3.1.3 *Methodological Considerations*

Consideration was given to both quantitative and qualitative research. Kirk and Miller (1986, p9) differentiate between the two by suggesting that:

> *". . . quality connotes the nature, as opposed to the quantity, or amount, of a thing....qualitative research would denote any research distinguished by the absence of counting . . . Qualitative research is an empirical, socially located phenomenon . . . Qualitative research involves sustained interaction with the people being studied in their own language, and on their own turf . . ."*

Quantitative research is, according to McNeill (1985, p41) based on the assumption made by natural scientists:

> *". . . that the natural world has an independent existence of its own, which is as it is regardless of those who are studying it, and which is governed by laws which can be discovered by the research scientist if only the right methods are developed. The knowledge that is discovered using these methods is regarded as objective and factual...Once that knowledge is gained, it can be used to explain events in the natural world, to make predictions about what will happen in the natural world, and thus to control that world . . ."*

Historically, it is from this position that research related to hospitality management has been undertaken, reflecting the dominance of the business and management professions.

Although the researcher's initial research philosophy was positivist, the need to understand the work and role of the hospitality manager led to an appreciation of the virtues of qualitative research to achieve his aims. Sustained interaction with people using their own language was not alien in any way to the researcher, so qualitative research was not uncomfortable, although theoretical issues had to be reconciled.

Bogdan and Taylor (1975) recognise the common characteristics of qualitative methods as the production of descriptive data, concerning the whole person, rather than quantitative methods, which concentrate on the study of single variables. The qualitative approach incorporates a variety of techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate, interpret and come to terms with the meaning of the data gathered. Kirk and Miller (1986, p.60) describe qualitative research as

> *". . . a four phase affair . . . [a] sequence of invention, discovery, interpretation, and explanation . . ."*

According to Van Maanen (1983, p9)

> *". . . To operate in a qualitative mode is to trade in linguistic symbols and, by so doing, attempt to reduce the distance between indicated and indicator, between theory and data, between context and action . . ."*

Van Maanen (1983, p20) also recognises that:

> *". . . there are many truths to be found that help shape and order organizational life. But, there is no requirement that such truths be highly general, consistent with one another, or necessarily permanent . . . Two researchers, of qualitative bent placed simultaneously in the same organizational setting are quite likely to produce very different research reports. This is both the strength and weakness of qualitative research . . ."*

The process of allowing the research to develop as it proceeds is a feature of qualitative research noted by Van Maanen (1983, p20)

> *". . . if one knew at the outset of a study precisely what it was one wanted to discover and how one should go about such discovery, most qualitative researchers would say, Why bother?"*

Note is taken of Deutscher (1975, pvi) in recognising the scary nature of qualitative research because of the unpredictability of the outcomes and the researcher's anxiety

> *". . . what if I don't find anything?"*

In consideration of the two paradigms, it appeared reasonable that I adopted a phenomenological approach which would include quantification data about the work of hospitality managers and how well the degree in hospitality management initially prepared them for their positions.

I acknowledge that the two basic philosophies cannot be amalgamated but, by employing a qualitative approach in the second phase (semi-structured interviews) of the study, sought to strengthen the value of the research. By using quantitative and qualitative approaches, the researcher recognised that different styles and methods of research can complement each other and fruitfully be used in conjunction with one another, the "*. . . methodological marriage . . .*" supported by Warwick (1983 p27).

The value of employing both a quantitative and qualitative approach was supported by Jick (1983 p135) who suggests that:

> "*. . . qualitative and quantitative method should be viewed as complementary rather than as rival camps . . .*"

This also is an idea that is in line with Lewin (1990), who commented that

> "*. . . the researcher has to make choices based around the research questions which are going to be asked. That is, that the researcher has to select the approaches and methods most likely to provide an insight and explanation into the investigation in hand . . .*"

in this case, the relevance and worth of the hospitality business management degree programme.

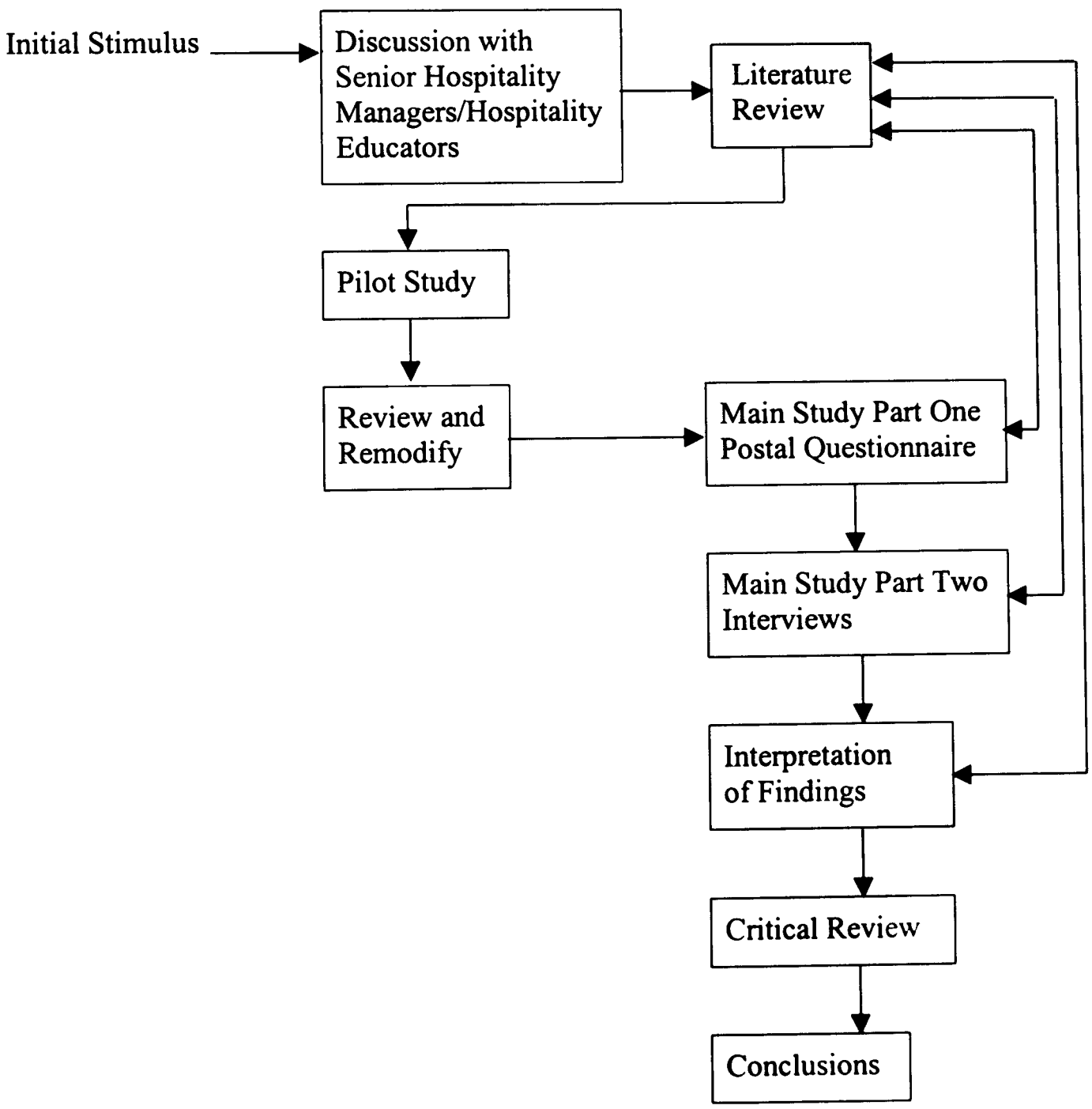
Consequently, it was felt that the use of both methods of data capture and respective analysis would help to gain a balance of understanding of the topic being researched

from the positivist, 'hard' facts on the one hand against more nebulous and subjective information on the other. It was perceived that this would give a more realistic view as to the 'real' value and worth of the vocational degree programme.

3.2 Design of the Study

Following consideration of the literature, the study was designed as shown in Figure 1. Details in respect of the individual components of the study design are discussed in the relevant subsequent sections.

Figure 1
(The Organisational Framework)



The study was undertaken with graduates from the BA (Hons) programme in Hospitality Business Management offered by the BCFTCS and validated by the University of Birmingham. This programme has produced graduates since 1992. The programme introduces graduates to a rapidly growing, diverse and constantly changing industry. While many subjects studied will remain constant across curricula others need to be developed to respond to industry, professional body and student needs.

According to Brymer and Pavesic (1989, p268)

> *"All these factors will have an impact on [student's] expectations and values as they pertain to a career in hospitality administration. Their impressions of the hospitality industry within the first five years after graduation can be of value to hospitality educators and industry practitioners in addressing the issues and concerns that influence their career longevity. It is of utmost importance to educators to study the graduates' retrospective assessment of their undergraduate education."*

The best methods of determining gaps or voids in a programme's curriculum is to survey the programme graduates to determine how well they were prepared when they completed their programme of study. An evaluation using 'hard' and 'soft' research methods can assist in determining the relevance of a programme of study. Sanders and Worthen (1987, p128) substantiates this stating:

> *". . . understanding comes from the assimilation of data from a number of sources, subjective and objective qualitative and quantitative representations of the phenomena being evaluated are used."*

The information and findings resulting from this study will greatly assist the College in the development of its programmes. According to Pavesic (1991, p39)

> *"The hospitality programs of the future must be built on a sound academic foundation. However, we are preparing students for the hospitality industry; therefore we must remain cognizant of the voice of the industry."*

He states further:

> *". . . as educators, we must be conscious of the limitations in curriculum design and program requirements. No program can be all things to all industry segments."*

Getty, Getty and Tas (1990, p403) undertook a quality assessment in hospitality management education and they recommended that:

> *"In general, it would behove the Hotel and Restaurant Management faculty to examine on a regular basis, course content, teaching methods and industry participation . . . Conduct studies to determine whether there are any significant differences in levels of satisfaction. These findings will assist in determining whether the academic program is continuing to meet its educational mission."*

The value of allowing the research to develop as it proceeds, as recognised by Van Maanen (1983), was deemed to be important in this study as any prejudgement of the end point may have precluded issues which were real to the participants and which impacted significantly on their responses.

3. 3 Case Study Research

Case studies generally focus on 'how and why' questions, typically using a variety of techniques or sub-samples and typically progress from broad to narrow. Case studies are particularly effective when there is little control over influencing variables. Case studies take an idiographic approach to the study of behaviour. ie that human beings are unique individuals, worthy of study in their own right. Such research involves making a detailed study of individuals or instances, eg one institution.

A strength of case study research is that it allows a detailed study of all aspects of the case rather than concentrating on just a few measurable characteristics. Because it uses both qualitative and quantitative data, it is less likely to miss facets of behaviour which cannot be simply measured.

Case studies also have weaknesses in that the limited number of instances that are studied means that caution has to be exercised when generalising the results. Additionally, because much of the work involves related subjective interpretation of the results, it is in the hands of the researcher and the procedures that are adopted.

3.3.1 *The Case*

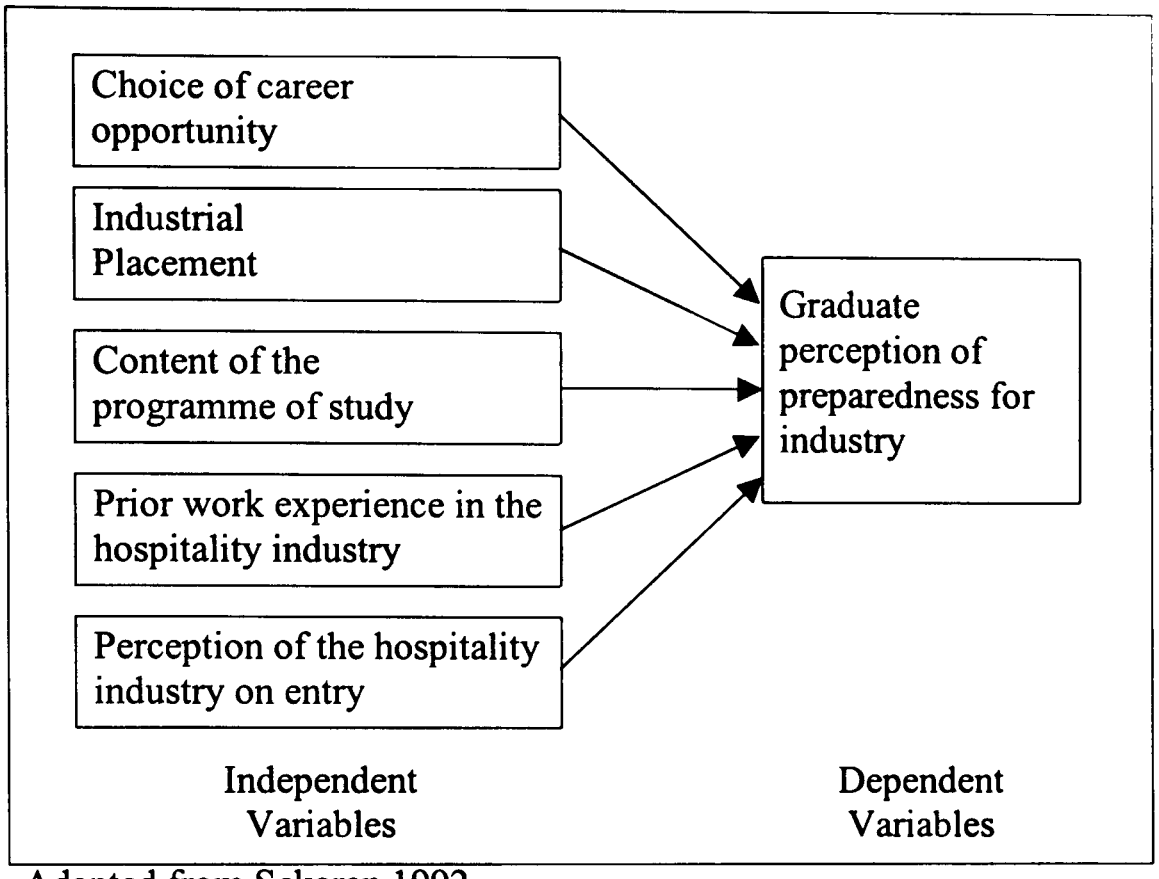
The empirical study was carried out using a sample of graduates from the Birmingham College of Food Tourism and Creative Studies (BCFTCS). The population-sampling frame included all of those ex-students who graduated between 1992 and 1997 from the BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management programme. The sample was selected after receipt of destination questionnaires which were completed by the population three months after the students graduated. Only those students who were still working in the hospitality industry at this time were selected for the study. These thus formed the sample and they comprised seventy-four per cent of the whole population. It was accepted that a small-scale study of this nature cannot usually be generalised to the whole UK population of hospitality graduates, but it should provide some key pointers. However, it should be borne in mind that the Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies is the largest single provider of all levels of hospitality education in the UK, and provides 7% of total provision of the UK's hospitality management education (Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), 1998). Thus it could be claimed that this should be a reasonable

indicator of values and trends in the UK as a whole. The decision to use only a sample from one institution brings with it the obligation to forego any claim for population validity of what Stenhouse (1978, p20) calls 'predictive generalisability'. This is acknowledged by the researcher, since all research designs carry with them both advantages and drawbacks. However here the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

The research design can be represented in a conceptual framework (see Figure 3) where the dependant variable is the graduates' perception of how well they have been prepared for a management position in the hospitality industry. This is the variable of primary interest for this thesis, and the parameters of variation are attempted to be clarified by the five chosen independent variables. These are:

- Perception of the hospitality industry on entry to the programme
- Prior work experience in the hospitality industry
- Content of the programme of study
- Industrial placement
- Choice of career opportunity

Figure 3
Conceptual Framework of Research Design



Adapted from Sekaran 1992

The perceptions of the industry that students had on entry to the programme are likely to lead to disillusionment if experience of the industry proved their expectations were unrealistic. One of the aims of this study is to explore this potential mismatch.

The programme content may influence their perceptions of the industry. On the one hand educators and industrialists may and should work together to develop programmes which ensure that students are committed to, and respected by, the industry. On the other hand, through programme content students may establish perceptions of the industry, and if these perceptions prove to be misplaced, for example, during a period of compulsory industrial placement, then disillusionment with the industry is possible, and may lead to a change in choice of career. Additionally, if the course content encompasses a broad business and management base, then a student is likely to be prepared for a much larger choice of career

alternatives, some of which may offer a more attractive career package than hospitality management. Thus it can be seen that there is a network of relationships involved which may influence the dependent variable (the graduate perception of preparedness for the industry).

It is clear from the theoretical framework expressed that the events or independent variables cannot be manipulated, thus supporting selection of the case study research method. According to Yin (1984) the case study research method is appropriate *"when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context"* and when *"you are trying to attribute causal relationships"*.

Indeed the theoretical framework pointed to a broad set of qualitatively different variables encompassing a network of complex interactions which may influence the outcomes of a graduate's perception, and which must be viewed within the context of occurrence.

The richness of the context means that the study will require multiple sources of evidence to be used. However, application of the case study method does not imply any particular form of data collection (Yin, 1984).

The case study is explanatory as it intends to present data pertinent to cause and effect relationships using pattern-making techniques, which according to Yin (1993) permits case studies to test complex multiple-variable, complex causal explanations within a single study.

Case studies using qualitative methods have been criticised for their alleged subjectivity, (Phillips, 1983; Eisner, 1993) Most researchers take quantitative method as 'more' objective, probably as a result of its historical links with scientific method and foundationalism (Smith and Heshius, 1986). Further, it may appear easier to critique the objectivity of a sampling technique; a statistical method chosen; the degree of confidence accepted. By definition, the qualitative inquirer cannot claim to be 'detached' from the research in the same way that the quantitative inquirer may claim to be. Although qualitative approaches often raise the concern of subjectivity of the researcher, one should not forget that social research, whether quantitative or qualitative, is itself part of the social world, something that should never be forgotten (Hammersley, 1992 p163). Scriven (1972) has argued that quantitative approaches can be equally susceptible to subjectivity. The ways in which questionnaires are worded are clearly open to subjectivity. All statistical data is based upon someone's definition of what to measure and how to measure it (Patton, 1987). The degree of subjectivity and bias lies in the researcher and the approach taken therein. To paraphrase Guba (1978), research should be reliable, factual and confirmable. He notes that 'neutrality' is important: that the researcher should strive to be as impartial as is possible and not be predisposed to a certain outcome.

The questions that one must ask here are:

- can the use of qualitative method ever achieve objectivity? Especially if it is constrained by human values and interests and characterised by close contact with the subject?

- is the notion of 'hygienic research', or of any research that is void of any human interests and values not tenable? Agreement in a certain time and place may be the best one can hope for.
- can any researcher make a legitimate claim to total objectivity?

Eisner (1993, p51) discussed the feasibility of ontological objectivity, or seeing things as they really are. He claims that we may never achieve ontological objectivity, and that we should not strive to achieve such impossibility. However, procedural objectivity is a second type of objectivity. This is achieved by using an approach that eliminates, or aspires to eliminate, the scope for personal bias in research. It is procedural objectivity that may help to increase a critical approach to this study, and where such is discussed and given, confidence in claims made can be enhanced. Consider Philips (1983, p71) on objectivity:

> *"It turns out, then, that what is crucial for the objectivity of the inquiry whether it be qualitative or quantitative - is the critical spirit in which it is carried out. And, of course, this suggests that there can be degrees; for the pursuit of criticism and refutation obviously can be carried out more or less seriously. 'Objectivity' is the label - the stamp of approval – that is used for inquiries that are at one end of the continuum; they are inquiries that are prized because of the great care and responsiveness to criticism with which they have been carried out. Inquiries at the other end of the continuum are stamped 'subjective' in that they have not been sufficiently opened to the light of reason and criticism. Most human inquiries are probably located somewhere in the middle, but the aim should be to move in the direction that will earn a full stamp of approval!"*

Therefore, procedural objectivity is about being aware; being aware of how we may be unintentionally, but adversely, affecting the research. This research design has considered this.

Thus, this research will not make a claim of 'total objectivity' in the research undertaken. It will provide, however, a justification of how the approach taken was as procedurally objective as possible. The detailed discussion of the paradigm and the use of method is aimed at demonstrating this.

All research may carry the inherent possibility of being biased. This inquiry has stated the purpose from which the research has been designed - namely the benefits to the College and the College's provision for students. Attention to care and responsiveness to criticism has been of paramount importance in the construction of this design. If the researcher consciously prejudices the research, the result will not achieve the aim of improving and consolidating the College provision to its students. As noted, no prejudged outcome was desired or expected.

3.4 Access to Participants

A significant issue in research is firstly to gain access to participants and obtain their willingness to participate. A number of writers have addressed the subject of gaining access to research subjects. Barber (1973, p105) notes the significance of the identity and legitimacy of the researcher, suggesting three techniques for gaining legitimacy:

- shared roles, goals and values;
- access to a possible countervailing power;
- relating to professionals as individuals rather than organisational members.

He warns researchers to be aware that, whatever the researchers' perception of themselves, the participants may perceive the researcher to be powerful. Delaney's

(1960, p.449) concern related to the difficulties of gaining initial access into an organisation for research purposes, suggesting that:

> *". . . .it is beneficial if the officials of the organisation consider the researcher to be neutral and on their side . . ."*

From their experience, Khan and Mann (1952, p4) suggest that access to an organisation can only be gained if the researcher has internal sponsorship, noting that the authority structure has to be used carefully if spontaneity and co-operation are to be secured, rather than docility and obedience.

Therefore, access is likely to be easier if the researcher has legitimacy within the organisation in which the research is to be undertaken, particularly if such legitimacy and the identity of the researcher are recognised by the potential participants. These factors in favour of obtaining access should not be abused and attention must be paid to confidentiality and reciprocation, when attempting to secure participation. The perceived power of the researcher must be remembered, and care must be taken to achieve willing access and subsequent participation, rather than compliance because of present or previous superordinate influence.

The researcher holds the post of Vice Principal of Academic Affairs within the Birmingham College where the research has been undertaken. This being the case, the issues of access to the participants was significantly facilitated.

3.4.1 *Confidentiality*

Confidentiality was an issue raised by some of the participants because of the sensitive issue of the data being collected. Verbal and written assurance was given

that all data would be confidential and the anonymity of the participants would be guaranteed.

3.5 The Instruments Used to Collect the Data

3.5.1 *Secondary Research*

Secondary research, in terms of a literature search and review is a necessary starting point for almost all research activities:

> *"Secondary information consists of sources of data and other information collected by others and archived in some form. These sources include governmental reports, industry studies, archived data sets and syndicated information services as well as traditional books and journals found in libraries. Secondary information offers relatively quick and inexpensive answers to many questions and is almost the point of departure for primary research."*
>
> Stewart & Kamins (1993, p21)

The secondary research was carried out undertaking a thorough review of all sources available, making particular use of ongoing electronic (CD ROM and on-line) enquiry methods, to ensure that the review was kept as up to date as possible.

This review began at an early stage in the study to seek a definition of 'hospitality' and 'hospitality management'. This provided an overview of the theory and practice of management, education and research in this field. The review then developed into the following research questions:

- What is hospitality management?
- What developments/changes have taken place within the hospitality industry?
- What is the definition of vocational education?

- What are the differences in academic and vocational programmes?
- What changes have taken place in vocational education, and how have they affected hospitality education?
- What is hospitality management education and how did it evolve?
- What developments/changes have taken place in hospitality education?

A decision was made to separate the literature into two chapters and to include the following:

i) Hospitality Management

ii) Models of Vocational Education

iii) Managing the Changes in Vocational Education

iv) Hospitality Management Education

The review of the literature presented in Chapters 1 and 2 provided the researcher with an exploration of the roots of the theory, historical data and changes that have occurred both in the hospitality industry and education over the years and helped direct the research.

3.5.2 *The Questionnaire*

The questionnaire was designed following the Dillman (1977, p20) 'Total Design Method' (TDM) (See Appendix 4). This method claims to increase the response rate by careful management of all factors which influence the rate of response.

> *"The TDM is as much a carefully orchestrated set of sequential events as specific design. Planning, timing, supervision, and control are fundamental requirements for its successful use. Attention to administrative detail is as crucial to obtaining high quality data as the questionnaire or cover letter."*

Dillman (1997, p12) states:

> *"The TDM consists of two parts. The first is to identify each aspect of the survey process that may affect either the quality or quantity of response and to shape each of them in such a way that the best possible responses are obtained. The second is to organize the survey efforts so that the design intentions are carried out in complete detail."*

If the response rate of a research study is low, its validity may be questioned. Of 48 surveys that utilised the TDM and were reported on by Dillman, the average response rate was 74 per cent.

Dillman claims that response to a survey is based on a theory of social exchange, rewards received by the respondents are greater than the cost of not responding. Most rewards are intangible but the respondents are shown in positive regard by having their names and the researcher's signature hand-signed, individual salutations and a feeling that their response will make a difference. The costs of responding are decreased by reducing the amount of time and effort it takes to complete the questionnaire, asking a few personal questions and providing a post paid reply envelope. Trust is established when the respondent is promised a copy of the results, or when the writers place themselves in a subordinate position, that is one of needing help (Dillman 1977). Other ways of showing consideration to the respondents are by thanking them, and encouraging comments.

In a number of places within the questionnaire the respondent was encouraged to make comments and was thanked for the time and thoughtfulness exhibited by completing the survey. The questionnaire was prepared with a limited number of questions on each page. The majority of questions were designed to be answered by ticking boxes and circling numbers, with a few requiring some comment.

While the TDM technique was important in the physical layout of the questionnaire, the information it was designed to generate was of prime importance. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to profile the role of the hospitality graduates in their professional role within the hospitality industry.

The questionnaires were prepared with three main sections:

Section 1 - asked the respondents basic information, including their name (optional), gender, date of graduation and questions relating to the type, size and location of the businesses in which they had been successful in securing employment, or not.

Section 2 - asked them questions relating to the industrial placement element of the programme. This element of the programme is quite significant as it represents 25 per cent of the degree programme. This section also asked the respondents if they had undertaken any post-graduate studies, or if they intended to do so.

Section 3 - required the respondents to make comment on the relevance of the Hospitality Business Management Programme to their role in industry. This involved rating their overall experience, the teaching methods they found most beneficial and to rank the degree of importance they place on each of the subjects they studied. They were also asked to predict if they felt that these subjects would become more or less important by 2005. The penultimate question in this section asked the respondents if they believed that changes or additions should be made to the programme. The final question in this section related to the topical subject of 'Graduateness' and graduate skills and they were asked to rank, in order, these eight skills.

3.5.3 *The Pilot*

Pilot testing took place during early March 1998, using ten current final year degree students. It was explained to them to whom the questionnaire was targeted and the objectives of the study. The main purpose of testing the questionnaire, was to discover the relevance of, and any ambiguities contained in, the questions. In addition, the pilot test sample was asked to give guidance and suggestions for either rewording or layout.

The comments were analysed, resulting in some amendments being made to the layout, and some further questions were added. A final review was made in early April 1998 using three of the previous sample who also read the letter to be sent to the respondents.

A cover letter was prepared using Dillman (1977) in the 'TDM' and the letter explained the nature and purpose of the study (See Appendix 5). The letter specified that the recipient had been chosen based on the following criteria: [1] being a graduate of the BA HBM programme of BCFTCS between 1992 and 1997 [2] securing a position in the hospitality industry after graduation.

The 'Total Design Method' emphasises that the cover letter is the "only opportunity the researcher has for anticipating and countering respondents' questions" (Dillman, p165). Therefore, each sentence in each paragraph serves a distinct purpose. The first paragraph must emphasise what the research is about and its usefulness. The second paragraph is to convince the respondent that his or her response is important. The third paragraph points to the promise of confidentiality.

Finally the letter stresses the importance of them accepting voluntarily to answer questions. The handwriting in ball point of the first name and signature on the letter, lets the receiver know it is not just another form letter with a mechanically reproduced signature.

The names and addresses were accessed from the College's management information system (MIS) analysing enrolments, completion and destination statistics and comparing these to make an accurate postal survey.

A promise was made to each respondent of an executive summary of the study, if so desired.

3.5.4 *Follow-up Mailing*

Because the questionnaire might be received, glanced over and then put aside, with firm intentions to look at it later on, a follow-up mailing is required. Dillman (1977) states "A questionnaire that lies unanswered for a week or more is not very likely to be returned". Therefore, ten days following the initial mailings, a further letter was sent to all members who had not responded. This letter was a 'jog of the memory' to the questionnaire recipient.

To be economical on space each sentence had a definite objective. First, the tie was made with the previous letter. This was followed by a "thank you if our letters have crossed in the post" and an entreaty to the non-respondents to reply because of the importance of their response. Then, if the first questionnaire had not been received, an invitation to get a replacement was issued through either contact by telephone,

post, or email. The letter again, was mail merged with personal name and signature. (See Appendix 6). (Dillman 1977, p184)

3.5.5 *The Second Follow-up Letter*

Four weeks following the initial mailing, a second follow-up letter with a stronger tone of insistence than the previous mailings, was sent to the non-respondents. Again a reference was made to the previous mailings and the respondent's importance was emphasised. A replacement questionnaire and a reply paid addressed envelope were enclosed to encourage the respondent to complete and return the questionnaire, (See Appendix 7).

3.5.6 *Response Rates and Processing the Data*

In April 1998, 242 graduates were sent a covering letter, questionnaire, and post-paid addressed envelope. Over the course of the next two and a half months, questionnaires were returned, some marked, "address incorrect", one from a parent advising of her son's bereavement; another seven graduates were travelling as part of a 'gap year'.

In late April 1998 a follow-up letter was sent to the entire population thanking them for returning the questionnaire and reminding them of the importance of their response if they had not replied. They were offered a re-mail questionnaire if they had lost or misplaced the original.

The penultimate page of the questionnaire contained a code, so it was possible to determine who had returned the questionnaire. In mid May 1998 a further mailing took place to the respondents who had not made any response. They were sent the

new letter; questionnaire and reply paid envelope. This resulted in 193 questionnaires being returned.

3.6 The Interview

In order to obtain confirmation from the respondents that the research method had provided data which accurately reflected their opinions, a semi-structured interview was carried out with a number of participants, using the framework shown in Appendix 8.

Interviews were organised and conducted, following the return of the initial questionnaire. The basis for the choice was determined by the answer they gave to question number nine which asked them 'How would they rate the relevance of the degree to their present employment?" This was on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the lowest relevance and 5 the highest. Eighteen graduates were selected; 12 who had rated the relevance 1-2 and eight that had rated the programme between 4-5. The hope was that at least 50% of each of these groups would be able to make an appointment for an interview. This information could be used to identify the main strengths and weaknesses in the programme.

3.6.1 *Choice of Interview Method*

As a research tool, interviews are widely used and have a range of formats - unstructured, semi-structured and structured. The greater the structure the less freedom is available for the respondents to express their opinions as they wish but conversely, the absence of structure in the research interview presents the researcher with significant analysis problems, particularly if responses are to be compared.

However, the semi-structured interview utilises a pre-determined core of open-ended questions or topics to be addressed, with the facility to pursue other related issues as they arise. This approach goes part way to overcoming the limitations inherent in interviewing, the flexibility of response ensures as much as possible that important issues are not missed, although the problems in analysis remain, but to a lesser extent.

Another variation of the interview is described by McNeill (1985, p68) as 'guided conversations' in which:

> *". . . the researcher . . . will ensure that the topics that have emerged as important are discussed, and will make notes, or even a recording of the respondents answers . . ."*

In determining the questions or areas to be explored during the interview, Bennett (1983, p112) suggests that these might stem from periods of general observation, noting that

> *". . . this is to be preferred to just dreaming up questions in the bath . . ."*

The researcher planned the interview questionnaire by observing some of the comments made on the initial questionnaire.

Bennett (1983, p112) recognises interview as an effective research method if

> *". . . the questioning is non-directive and free from biased or loaded questions, if the interviewer is a good, attentive listener (and adept recorder) and if the interviewee is open and candid . . ."*

However, he does recognise that problems of time and cost may limit the use of this method.

Alderfer & Brown (1972, p456) recognise that a respondent may be prepared to reveal threatening information about himself or his organisation, if empathy exists between himself and the researcher, therefore stressing the need for research approaches to reduce the distance between them and thus encourage the empathetic relationship. Barber (1973, p106) also pursues this theme, emphasising the positive effect that shared goals, roles and values have on the relationship.

The interview protocols were designed to elicit highly subjective material from the respondents. The objective was to get the 'native' point of view relative to the programme whilst at the same time probing the programme's relevance for the interviewee. It was planned that the interviews would be conducted in person by the researcher, allowing the interviewee an opportunity to reflect both positively and negatively on the various aspects of the programme.

3.6.2 *Interview Process*

The prospective interviewees were first contacted by letter asking them to agree to the interview and sign the Pro-forma consent slip in the letter. No undue pressure was put on the respondent to participate in the interview because some aspects of the data to be collected was going to be reported verbatim in the final report.

To provide information to the sample group, the interview protocol was provided in this letter (Appendix 9) and a post-paid reply envelope was also included. The theme of the letter was designed to make the recipients feel that their opinions were important to complete the study. Anonymity was guaranteed, as the researcher would be using fictitious names in the text. The letter concluded by clarifying that the

respondents would be contacted within the next ten days to arrange a meeting. When the respondents were contacted by telephone they were reminded of the aims of the study, and the importance of their views. A suitable time and venue was agreed and personal thanks were made for their co-operation.

The aim of the telephone call was to try to arrange the interview at the respondent's place of work, on their own 'turf', which the theorists claim would put the interviewee at ease and prepared to be more open.

Each interview was conducted separately and all were taped, with the permission of the interviewees. After the interview notes were transcribed and subsequently destroyed. At the end of this process six interviews were conducted face to face, two interviews were conducted over the telephone and four individuals decided to respond in writing. Each graduate was personally contacted, thanking them for their time and assistance. The interviews were conducted over a period from late June to mid July 1998.

The interview data, which was collected, has been reported in narrative form as the researcher believed that this would give 'quality' and 'richness' to the results, in the interviewee's own words.

3.6.3 *Interview with Senior Programme Administrators*

Three senior academics involved in the planning and delivery of hospitality courses in the College were identified as the interview sample. These academics were selected as they are all involved in internal continuous quality review audits as managers.

These audits take place three times a year whilst the students are in college. The rationale for selection of these individuals was to feed back new data from the ex graduates who had time to reflect on their educational experience whilst working industry. The information from the research was fed to the managers for their comment. The managers were then asked whether they would be willing to make some comments on findings from the current research which would be likely to have an impact on the course provision. The questions and their responses are provided in (Appendix 10). The interviews provided no challenge to the interviewees and anonymity was not an issue. The findings of these interviews are presented in Chapter 4 as responses to some of the issues as they arose. They provide some ideas as to how the College might take forward the programme development.

3.7 Data Processing and Methods of Analysis

3.7.1 *The Questionnaire Analysis*

In line with the purpose of the study and research questions outlined in the Introduction and the instrumentation used, the following descriptive statistical procedures were used to analyse the data:

A Filemaker Pro database (FM Pro 3.0) was set up to receive the questionnaire data. As the questionnaires were returned, the data was entered into the database ready for processing. Once all the questionnaires were returned, initial analysis was undertaken by importing the information into MS Access to facilitate cross tabulations of data. The next step was to produce frequency tabulations of all the responses in the fields that were not text free. Where appropriate, for example when Likert scales were used, then average scores were calculated for categories. The data was then archived.

Further statistical analysis of the data was undertaken using the SPSS statistical package. The actual analyses that were undertaken are explained later, in the findings chapter, as appropriate to each data set analysed.

3.7.2 *The Interview Data Analysis*

The analysis of the interview data can be complex and a time-consuming activity; therefore in analysing the subjects' responses there was a need to develop a reliable, standardised approach. Both Hyener (1985, pp279-283) and Easterby-Smith et al (1994, pp372-82) offer a similar staged approach which was applied to each transcript. Synthesising both approaches, the key stages of the analysis were as follows:

1. *Transcription* - The recorded interview tapes were transcribed, forming data transcripts which could be read as well as listened to in entirety on several occasions. This process provided the opportunity for entering into the respondent's world as well as noting, for example, where voice change occurred, thus providing a context for the subject's meaning.

2. *Reflection* - Having gained a sense of the whole, essentially this stage was concerned with a general feel for the 'so what' or 'that's interesting' aspect of how the data supports or challenges existing knowledge or provides insights into previously unanswered questions, as well as identifying a set of general concepts which seemed important for understanding the subjects account.

3. *Cataloguing* – Once the initial concepts emerging from each question were identified it was possible systematically to transfer the individual concepts, together with transcript reference, onto paper as a cross-check and quick reference guide.

4. *Linking* – Having established an analytical framework, which catalogued the concepts, the final stage of the analysis was to link the empirical data with the issues raised from the literature and deliberations of the earlier chapters. The results of this analysis are presented in the following chapters of the study where the findings are presented and discussed.
5. *Application* – After the foregoing processes had been applied to the data, the results were integrated into chapters four, five and six. The data was used to either support or refute the arguments of the research that were being built. The full transcripts of the interviews can be seen in the appendices.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Defining an ethical standpoint in research involving people is about the balancing of risk against value in a context of informed consent. These issues need to be considered in any research with human subjects and in any research involving such methodologies as surveys and interviews. The following issues were considered and addressed in the research in this report, even though the research had a low risk of causing any harm to the subjects.

A clear statement of the rationale and research design was made. This was conveyed to the subjects of the research and implicit consent was received. Participants were

entirely free to choose not to participate in the study. However, it was accepted that the researcher was to some extent in a position of power in his relationship with the subjects. This power was never used overtly, and within the guidelines of Dillman (1977) research design, follow up procedures were used only to attempt to improve the response rate of the participants. Participants' right to refuse to take part was respected in all cases. Where tape recordings were used in interviews, this was never covert, permission being sought from all interviewees.

The researcher was open and honest in all dealings with the participants, and full information was given when requested. There was never any requirement to withhold information from participants, so this was not an issue. No covert studies were needed for the conduct of the research.

Participants were told that any information that they provided would remain confidential. In the case of the data collected by questionnaire, the data was kept in an encoded form, so that individual names or organisations were not recognisable. In the case of the interview data, names of participants were either changed or not used at all. The material collected was used only for the research purpose for which it was collected and for which participants had been briefed. Given the foregoing, it was considered that all possible steps had been taken to protect participants from any possible harm that might come from this research.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research design and the methods that were used to collect and analyse data that would answer the researcher's questions and test his assumptions. Two data collection methods were used in the survey, questionnaires and interviews. It has described the processes that were followed in the design and dissemination of the questionnaires and the planning and conduct of the interviews. The next chapter presents and analyses the data that was collected.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to tabulate and analyse the information gathered from the survey instrument and to interpret from the narrative format the responses of the interviews.

As already stated the main purpose of the study was to follow-up on career progression of graduates of the BA (Hons) degree in Hospitality Business Management at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies. To be considered for this survey the individual had to have graduated from the Hospitality Business Programme from 1992 to 1997 and to have secured a position within the hospitality industry on graduation. Two-hundred-and-forty-two graduates who met the criteria were identified.

4.1 The Quantitative Study

The survey instrument was constructed following the methodological proposals of Dillman's (1977) 'Total Design Method', which states that response to a survey is based on the social exchange theory and that to receive the largest possible response and to increase the validity of the research it is important to place the value of the respondent above all else. This he recommends should be done through a personalised process.

The initial questionnaires were posted in April 1998, and the last response used in this research was returned in mid August 1998. Two-hundred-and-forty-two graduates had been identified from the College's information system alumni database. Two questionnaires had been returned as 'address incorrect', seven parents telephoned or returned blank questionnaires stating that their son or daughter was travelling as part of a 'gap year', and one parent advised of her son's bereavement.

A representative sample of the population is what the researcher desires and one indicator of representativeness is the response rate. The method for determining the response rate is through Dillman's mathematical formula, which is, the total number of replies returned divided by the sample population, minus the non-eligible, which provides the percentage response rate.

Illustrating this formula the completed responses are as follows:

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{Number of replies } 193}{\text{Population Number } 242 - (7+2+1)\ (\text{non-eligible} + \text{non-reachable})} = \frac{193}{232} = +83.18\%$$

(Dillman, p49)

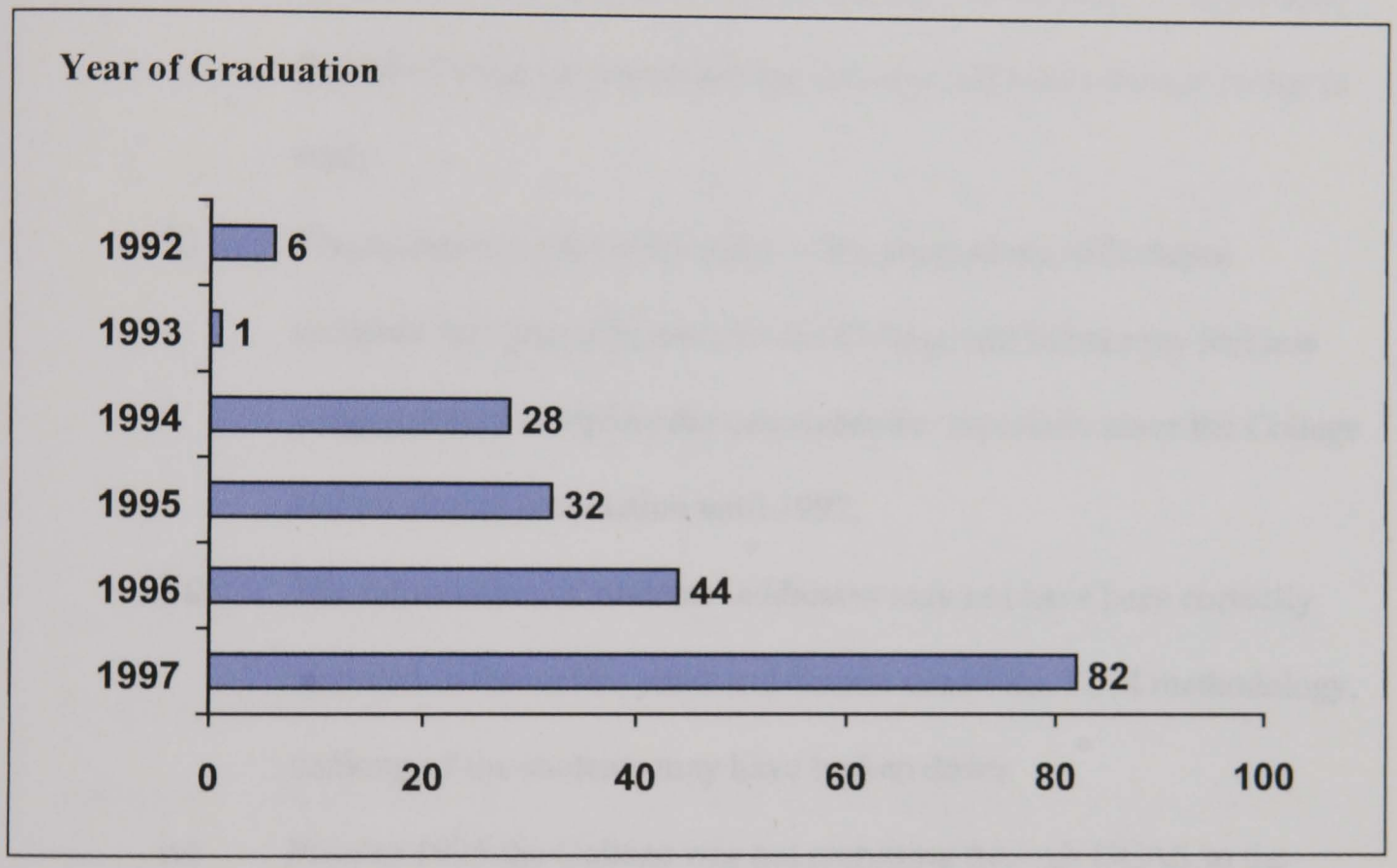
This is a very high return rate which can be attributed to the use of the TDM method and the fact that the researcher was quite well known to all of the respondents.

Another applicable measure of the sample representativeness is the responses from the Birmingham HBM graduates spanning the period which the study covers. The

study was designed to gain feedback from those graduates who completed the programme between 1992 – 1997; Figure 4 below illustrates the response rates of graduates based on their year of graduation.

Figure 4

Breakdown of sample by year of graduation **n-193**



There are a number of factors which could have contributed to the low response in the earlier years, these include; the time factor, the cohorts of students were quite small in the initial years of the programme and the College's MIS system was not very sophisticated. The present system was installed in late 1994 and can give much more accurate information on student personal details, achievement and destinations.

This data would suggest that the results of the findings presented later in this section will be skewed, with increasing emphasis on results based on students from the later

years. However, it should be borne in mind that numbers of students on the programme also increased with the passage of time. So the bias may not be as great as it appears.

The low number of respondents from 1992-1994 could be the result of a number of factors:-

i) In 1992 the total final year cohort was only 22 students. It is possible that 16 of these have now left the industry and hence did not bother to reply.

ii) The students in the earlier years of the programme will almost certainly feel less affiliation for the College and hence may feel less compulsion to complete the questionnaire, especially since the College had no alumni association until 1997.

iii) The information of students' addresses may not have been correctly recorded in the earlier years and despite use of the TDM methodology, tracking of the students may have broken down.

iv) Prior to 1995 the College was not recruiting through UCAS so the records from that institution were not available for this research.

v) The earlier years of the 1990's coincided with the end of the economic downturn. Service sector graduates experienced difficulties in obtaining employment in their chosen industry. Thus they may have been forced to take jobs in other sectors or may indeed have been unemployed.

vi) It is possible that a percentage of the non-respondents only had a short stay in the industry for other reasons, eg marriage of female respondents.

4.1.1 Section One – Graduate Profiles

Section One of the survey instrument asked the respondents for information regarding their current positions ie

- the sector of the hospitality industry in which they were working
- the geographical location and country in which they had secured positions,
- the size of the organisation,
- their present title or position,
- number of posts they had held since graduation.

Table 1 below illustrates the types of hospitality organisation or company in which the graduate respondents had secured employment. Types of employment found by graduates varied considerably and this reflects the broad spectrum of the hospitality industry.

Table 1

Employment Profile of Respondents

	n	**%**
Hotels	51	26.0
Contract/Outside Catering	19	10.0
Conference and Exhibition Catering	16	8.5
Lecturing/Teaching	14	7.25

Restaurant (Private)	14	7.25
Fast Food Restaurants	12	6.5
Public House/Restaurant	8	4.1
Hospital Catering	6	3.1
Airlines	5	2.6
Golf Course and Leisure Management	5	2.6
Night-club/Casino	4	2.1
Education University Catering	4	2.1
Tour Operator/Travel Agency	4	2.1
Timeshare Operator	3	1.5
Hospitality Design	1	0.5
Hotel Inspector	1	0.5
Finance/Banking	5	2.6
Marketing/Sales	2	1.0
Government Clerical	2	1.0
Car Salesman	1	0.5
Optical Salesman	1	0.5
General Sales	1	0.5
Publishing Company	1	0.5
Factory Junior Manager	1	0.5
Wholesaler	1	0.5
Studying Full-time	6	3.1
Unemployed	5	2.6
	n = 193	

The table above illustrates that the largest single areas in which graduates were employed was Hotels, with 51 responses (26%) followed by Contract Catering 19 responses (10%) and Conference and Exhibition Catering 16 responses (8.2%). The majority of the respondents 117 (65%) secured employment in the seven main categories stated on the questionnaire.

Another 43 (22%) of the respondents had secured employment in organisations which were representative of the entire hospitality industry. Fourteen of these responses (7.25%) identified that graduates had entered the teaching /lecturing profession, teaching hospitality and related subjects. Fifteen respondents had left the hospitality industry completely and had entered a variety of other industries securing supervisory or management positions. Five respondents were unemployed at this time, for a variety of reasons and a further six were studying full-time.

Table 2 below identifies the geographical location of where the respondents were employed. The majority of the respondents 114 (59%) were located in the UK. The rest in varying number were employed in eighteen different countries.

Table 2

Geographical Location of Graduate Employment

Country	**n**	**%**
United Kingdom	114	59.05
China & Hong Kong	34	17.60
Eire	6	3.10
Cyprus	5	2.59

Israel	4	2.08
Germany	3	1.55
USA	2	1.04
Australia	2	1.04
Canada	2	1.04
Greece	1	0.52
Macao	1	0.52
Malaysia	1	0.52
Malta	1	0.52
New Zealand	1	0.52
Switzerland	1	0.52
Netherlands	1	0.52
United Arab Emirates	1	0.52
Did Not State	13	6.75
	n=193	

The location of these employment positions was predominantly in the UK (59%). China and Hong Kong were next with (17.6%), then Eire with (3.1%), Cyprus with (2.59%) and Israel (2%). The other respondents were working in eleven different countries spread around the world. Thirteen of the respondents either did not state, or were not employed at this time.

The above results reflect the international nature of the College, which has attracted students from over 50 countries.

Table 3

Size of the Organisation Employing Graduates

	n	%
Under 20 employees	23	12.0
20<50 employees	32	16.5
50<100 employees	24	12.5
100<1000 employees	62	32.0
1000+	26	13.5
Did not state	26	13.5
	n = 193	

Size of the Organisation

It was identified that the majority of the employment positions were with companies employing less than 1,000 employees, and in 41% of those positions graduates were working in organisations with less than 100 employees. Only 13.5% of graduates reported their company size as more than 1,000 employees.

Table 3 above is interesting in that it does not reflect the structure of the industry (ie 95% SME'S) but must reflect the spread of graduates' employment ie mostly going into larger chain organisations. This probably reflects the fact that the larger organisations have graduate training programmes which lead directly to junior management posts on successful completion.

(The EC defines a SME as having fewer than 500 employees; less than ECU 75million in fixed assets and less than ECU 50 million in revenue.)

Report by Andersen (1997)

Departments of the Hospitality Industry in Which the Sample Were Employed

Question 4 asked the respondents to indicate in which departments, units or sectors of the industry they were employed. It was felt that the nature of the hospitality industry was diverse, with many different sectors in which graduates may have specialised. Of the 193 respondents, 26 were either employed in another industry, unemployed or in full-time study. Therefore, the table below identifies those students who were still employed in the hospitality industry, totalling 167.

Table 4

Sector, Department or Unit in Which the Sample Were Employed

Department	**n**	**%**
Food and Beverage	34	20
Catering	24	14.1
Sales and Marketing	19	11.5
General Management	19	11.5
Teaching (hospitality subjects)	14	8.5
Personnel and Human Resources	13	7.7
Front Office	8	5.0
Banqueting	8	5.0
Accounts	5	3.0
Pubs and Bars	4	2.5
Guest Services	4	2.5
Housekeeping	3	1.8
Reservations	3	1.8
Kitchen	2	1.2

Flight Attendant	2	1.2
Administration	2	1.2
Control	1	0.5
Purchasing	1	0.5
Hotel Software Trainer	1	0.5
	n = 167	100%

Table 4 above indicates the sector, department or unit where the 167 members of the sample, (who were still working in the hospitality industry) were employed. When one identifies communality of areas within the hospitality industry in which the sample specialised, the results show that 72, (43%) were engaged in the general areas of Food and Beverage type roles. Thirty-four, (20%) respondents represented the roles, which could be described as 'Customer Interface' ie, Front of House Management. The remaining respondents were in departments which support other sectors of the industry. The support departments identified included, Sales and Marketing, Personnel, Accounts, Administration, Control, Purchasing, and Trainer giving a total of 42, (25%). There was perhaps an unusually high number, 14 (8.5%) of the sample that had entered the teaching profession, specialising in the teaching of hospitality, and related subjects. However, further analysis identified that 10 of these respondents had studied the HBM programme as mature students, previously having gained substantial experience in the hospitality industry.

Previous Employment

Question 5 asked the respondents to state how many full-time jobs they had taken since graduation and the following table expresses the results obtained:

Table 5

Employment History of Respondents

	n	%
Same post since graduation	31	16.0
Second post since graduation	78	40.5
Third post since graduation	57	29.5
Fourth post since graduation	23	12.0
Fifth post since graduation	2	1.0
Sixth post since graduation	0	0
Seventh post since graduation	2	1.0
	n=193	

The respondents in this survey graduated between 1992 and 1997. Table 5 above identifies that 109 (56%) have had less than two posts since graduation which is a low turnover rate. However, it must be noted that some of the respondents in this survey had only graduated 10 months prior to the study and so further analysis must be carried out to determine which respondents had changed post most often.

The majority of respondents (56%) had less than two posts since graduation, which was considered to be quite a low turnover rate. On further analysis it was revealed that those respondents who graduated pre 1996 (67 respondents) had an average of 2.94 jobs per respondent. Whereas the post 1996 respondents (126) had an average of 2.22 jobs per respondent.

4.1.2 Section Two – Industrial Placement

Section 2 of the questionnaire related to industrial placement. This element of the programme represents one full academic year (25%) of the programme. Some students can gain exemption by submitting a portfolio of evidence, which shows substantial industrial experience, gained before embarking on the BA programme.

Industrial placement in Hospitality Management programmes does in fact reflect the German 'dual system' with workplace and college education combined. Hickox (1995) does not support Barnett's (1986) view of Higher Education.

Question 6 asked the respondents if they had undertaken a period of industrial placement as part of their course or were they exempt. Table 6 below illustrates the sample responses:

Table 6

Industrial Placement Participation

	n	**%**
Placement undertaken	137	71
Exemption from placement	51	26.5
Did not respond	5	2.5
	n=193	

From the above table it can be identified that 51 (26.5%) of respondents had previous substantial industrial experience before embarking on the programme. It was felt that

a link might exist between prior industrial experience and the expectation the respondents had of the industry after graduation.

Additionally, question 6 asked a number of questions relating to the industrial placement period, ie

- Sector of industry where placement was undertaken
- Evaluation of how it developed their skills
- How placement affected their subsequent choice of career
- Did they consider that industrial placement should be a compulsory element of the BA HBM programme.

Table 7 below identifies the sectors of the hospitality industry where students took their placement: (Question 6.1)

Table 7

Sector of Industry Where the Placement Took Place

	n	**%**
Hotels	117	85.5
Public House Restaurants	4	3.0
Private Club	3	2.0
Conference and Exhibition Centres	3	2.0
Theme Parks	2	1.5
Private Restaurants	2	1.5
Contract Caterers	2	1.5

Licensed Retail	2	1.5
Event Caterers	1	0.75
Country House Hotel	1	0.75
	n = 137	

The majority of respondents, 117 (85.5%), who undertook placement as part of the BA HBM programme did so in hotels. There are a number of reasons why students undertake placements in hotels; these include:

- the College is involved in an agreement called the '***Hospitality Partnership***' (see Appendix 1) which is made up of mainly hotel employers. This partnership supports Van Hoof's (1991) view that it is important that HEI's work closely with hospitality industry leaders.
- hotels in general tend to offer a good placement package including a varied and structured training programme, free or subsidised accommodation, meals on duty and a reasonably good training salary.
- there are more overseas placement opportunities in the hotel sector, especially USA.
- hotels tend to be a more attractive option to students with no previous experience in the hospitality industry offering a variety of work.

Question 6.2 asked students to rank how they would evaluate their placement, and the scale for this was 1-4, with 1 being poor and 4 being very good. Table 8 below identifies, in positive score, area how the students felt their skills had been addressed.

Table 8

Skills Developed on Placement

Skills Developed	Average mean score 1-4 scale
Developing teamwork	3.21
Developing practical skills	3.17
Developing skills to cope under pressure	3.07
Developing future career	2.62
Developing supervisory skills	2.21
Developing management skills	2.01

The results above identify that the three main areas where the respondents had developed skills were in the area of teamwork, practical work, and coping with pressure. All of these areas produced average scores of good or better. The remaining three areas ie developing future career, supervisory and management skills ranked between 2.62 and 2.01 respectively which is only just above adequate.

Evaluation of the Skills Developed on Placement

The data supplied by the respondents revealed that the main skills developed on the placement year were teamwork, practical skills and being able to cope under pressure. All of these skills carried an average mean score of over 3 out of a possible 4. The respondents believed that the supervisory and management skills were not developed as well, ranking these skills as only 2 out of a possible 4.

Question 6.3 asked the respondents to state whether the industrial placement had made them more or less enthusiastic about entering the hospitality industry after graduation. The results are in table 9 below:

Table 9

Effects of Industrial Placement

	n	%
More enthusiastic about entering the hospitality industry	52	38.0
Less enthusiastic about entering the hospitality industry	42	30.5
It had no effect	43	31.5
	n = 137	100.0

When questioned as to whether the placement made them more or less enthusiastic about entering the industry on graduation the results identified that 38% were more enthusiastic, 30.5% less enthusiastic and for 31.5% it had no effect.

Question 7 asked the respondents whether they would recommend an industrial placement period as an essential part of a hospitality management degree course. The results were as shown overleaf:

Table 10

Should Industrial Placement Remain an Essential Part of Hospitality Management Degrees?

	n	%
Placement recommended	165	85.5
Placement not recommended	17	8.8
Did not respond	11	5.7
	n = 193	100.0

The second part of the question asked for reasons for the answer given. The main reasons cited were:

i) To gain real 'hands-on' experience and develop practical skills (123 responses)

ii) To develop personality, teamwork and confidence (72 responses)

iii) To put the final year study into an industrial context (12 responses)

iv) Assistance with focusing on career choice and development (6 responses)

The comments here are reflective of the majority of the respondents' remarks. In all 174 respondents chose to add comment on this question. One-hundred-and-sixty-five of these responses were positive or favourable reinforcements of the industrial placement experience. A large number believed that the placement was a very important part of the programme. These comments identified that the respondents built up their technical skills and competencies and this made them more confident in work practices.

A few respondents who answered "no" to this question commented with less positive comments. Some students perceived themselves to be exploited, eg doing menial tasks rather than gaining a rounded management training that they expected.

Unfortunately, some establishments do not always take training seriously and do not treat students fairly. Many students do not have a proper training programme to follow and consequently do not gain full benefit from the placement. All establishment used by the BCFTCS are evaluated annually, this is based on students' and visiting mentors' comments. Establishments not providing suitable placements are contacted and if there is no significant improvement, they are eventually removed from the database.

4.1.3 Postgraduate Studies

The final question in Section Two dealt with post-graduate studies and asked the respondents if they had undertaken or intended to undertake a post-graduate qualification. The question then required the respondents to comment on what type of programme they intended to study and why. It was hoped that this question would provide information on general progression and the continual professional development of hospitality managers.

Table 11 overleaf displays the graduates' responses to this question:

Table 11

Participation in Postgraduate Studies

Postgraduate qualification		**%**
Yes	91	47.2
No	90	46.6
Not sure	12	6.2
	n = 193	100

As represented in the above table, the number of graduates indicating their intention to study for a post-graduate qualification was 91 (47.2%), with 90 (46.6%) reporting that they would not pursue a post-graduate qualification, while 12 (6.2%) were not sure at this point in time.

Hotel managers used to have very few qualifications. HCTC (1992), Gamble & Messenger (1989) and Anderson (1991). However, results here suggest that a degree is probably the minimum qualification now needed for a management post, and graduates perceive that a masters degree may well be advantageous (especially an MBA). Schofield (1998) states that graduates should take responsibility for own development. This is reflected in graduates going on to masters degree level and demonstrating self motivation through self funding their studies.

The respondents who indicated 'yes' all listed the type of postgraduate qualification that they wished to pursue. These responses are listed over in Table 12:

Table 12

Types of Postgraduate Courses Studied

Type of Programme	**n**	**%**
MBA	34	38.20
MA in Hospitality Management	11	12.36
MSc Human Resource Management	10	11.25
MSc in Marketing	10	11.25
Post Graduate/MEd Education	8	9.00
MA/MSc Tourism	6	6.74
Institute of Personnel Development (IPD)	3	3.36
MSc Research Methods	2	2.24
MSc Business Management	2	2.24
Post Graduate Diploma in Strategic Management	1	1.12
MSc in Food and Business	1	1.12
MSc in Information Technology	1	1.12
	n = 89	100

Table 12 identifies the type of qualification the respondents had or wished to pursue. The most popular listed post-graduate programme was the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) with 34 (38.2%) of the respondents choosing this qualification. The next most popular programmes were Hospitality Management 11(12.36%), Human Resource Management 10 (11.25%), Education 8 (9%) and Tourism 6 (6%). Other programmes included; Personnel, Business Management, Law, Strategic Management, Food and Information Technology.

The results of this question suggest that there is only a small percentage (12.36%) of the respondents interested in post-graduate qualification in hospitality management.

Twenty-one respondents stated that they had already completed a post-graduate qualification.

The second part of this question asked the respondents to give the reason for undertaking post-graduate study. The following is a cross-section of the responses received to this question. Sixty-six out of 91 respondents gave a reason to choosing a post-graduate course and responses were of a generally similar nature ie

Table 13

Reason for Postgraduate Studies

Reason	**n**	**%**
"To gain promotion within the hospitality industry"	31	47.0
"To change profession"	7	10.7
"To move into lecturing"	5	7.5
"Personal development"	4	6.1
"To develop strategic management skills"	4	6.1
"Degree qualification is only considered a 'basic' qualification"	3	4.6
"To start own business"	2	3.0
"To improve salary"	2	3.0
"To improve skills"	2	3.0
"To gain a Government position (HK)"	1	1.5
"To gain professional body membership"	1	1.5

"To prepare for the Millennium"	1	1.5
"To join a large corporation"	1	1.5
"It's a trend in my country (HK) to have a MBA"	1	1.5
"To improve my research skills"	1	1.5
	n = 66	

A significant percentage of the respondents felt that they required post-graduate qualifications in order to gain promotion and to improve their salary ie 33 (50%). The other 33 (50%) were studying for a variety of reasons, from moving profession to starting a business of their own.

4.1.4 Section Three: Relevance of the HBM Programme

Part three of the questionnaire related to the relevance of the BA Hospitality Business Management degree to their present employment. Respondents were asked to score on a scale of 1-5, (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest) the relevance of the course. Table 14 below represents the responses to this question:

Table 14

Programme Relevance

	Score	**n**	**%**
Low	1	11	5.7
	2	22	11.4
	3	67	34.7
	4	57	29.6
High	5	29	15.0
No response		7	3.6
		n = 193	100

If one takes the rating of 3 as satisfactory, then 33 (17%) respondents felt the programme relevance was below satisfactory level and 86 (44.6%) felt it was higher than satisfactory, with 67 (34%) feeling that it was only satisfactory and 7 (3.6%) did not respond at all. The overall mean score for all respondents who answered this question was 3.38, which is above satisfactory.

The relevance of the HBM programme, which the respondents rated on a scale of 1-5 above, represents the whole population. If one breaks down these responses against other selected responses it should yield further information. Six separate respondent characteristics were identified;

- gender
- year of graduation
- geographical location of employment
- the size of the employing organisation
- the students who were exempt from placement because of previous hospitality experience
- the sector of the hospitality industry where the respondents were employed.

With the aid of a statistical software package it was possible to combine these respondents' characteristics and computer analyse responses to the question on programme relevance for the respondent's current hospitality industry position. The results are listed below:

The ratio of female graduates to male who responded was 110 females (58%), to males 74 (38.4%) (nine did not respond). This is a similar percentage to the make up of the cohort annually.

Table 15

Relevance of Programme Against Gender

Gender	n	Average mean score
Female	110	3.25
Male	74	3.52
Did not state	9	3.8
	n = 193	

Table 16

Relevance of the Programme Against the Year of Graduation

Year	n	Average mean score
1992	6	3.16
1993	1	1
1994	28	3.77
1995	32	3.43
1996	44	3.22
1997	82	3.4
	n = 193	

Table 17

Relevance of Programme Against Geographical Location of Employment

Country	n	Average mean score
USA	2	4.5
Germany	3	4.3
Ireland	6	4.3
Cyprus	5	4
Greece	1	4
Macao	1	4
Malta	1	4
New Zealand	1	4
Netherlands	1	4
UAE	1	4
Canada	2	3.5
UK	114	3.3
China /Hong Kong	33	3.1
Israel	4	3
Switzerland	1	3
Australia	2	2.5
Malaysia	2	2
Did Not State	13	3.15
	n = 193	

Table 18

UK Against the Rest of the World

	n	Average mean score
UK	114	3.3
Rest of the World	66	3.43
	n = 180	

Table 19

Relevance of the Programme Against the Size of the Employing Organisation

Size of the organisation	n	Average mean score
Under 20 employees	23	3.43
20-50 employees	32	3.19
50-100 employees	24	3
100-1000 employees	62	3.65
Over 1000 employees	26	3.31
Did not state	26	3.37
	n = 193	

Table 20 **Relevance of the Programme Against Industrial Placement or Exemption**

	n	Average mean score
Placement undertaken	137	3.3
Exemption from placement	51	3.7
Did not state	5	3
	n = 193	

Table 21 **Relevance of the Programme Against Present Sector of Employment.**

Sector	n	Average mean score
Public House /Restaurant	8	4.0
Hospital catering	6	4.0
Hotel	51	3.69
Restaurant (private)	14	3.66
Conference/Exhibition	16	3.3
Contract Catering	19	3.3
Fast Food Restaurant	12	3.0
All other responses	67	3.19
	n = 193	

Further statistical analysis of these six factors was undertaken using SPSS statistical package. The only significant result was between those graduates working in organisations of 100<1000 employees who found the programme more relevant to their needs.

4.1.5 Teaching Methods Experienced

Question 10 asked respondents to rate the teaching methods they experienced during their HBM programme. The second part of this question asked the graduates to recommend other teaching methods they would recommend to future undergraduate teaching.

The main objectives of this question were to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each method. A Likert Scale was used, with 1 = poorest and 5 = best. The second part required respondents to write in a response.

The results of the first part of the question is presented in Table 22 below with the highest score first:

Table 22

Teaching Method Preference

Teaching Method	**Mean Score**
Field Trips	3.03
Outside Speakers	3.01
Tutorials	2.94
Seminars	2.71
Formal Lectures	2.47
Practical Work	2.37
Group Exercise	2.30

Table 22 represents the findings of respondents' impressions of the teaching methods they experienced during their programme of study. The data illustrates that Field Trips and Outside Speakers rated the highest with a mean score of 3.03 and 3.01 respectively. Tutorials and seminars rated next, with a mean average of 2.94 and 2.71. The least effective method was group exercises with a mean score of 2.30.

Many of the respondents suggested improvements or other methods of teaching future undergraduates. These included:

Table 23

Suggested improvements of teaching methods

"More live projects with local industry"	10
"Role playing exercises"	8
"Increase field study visits"	8
"More visiting speakers"	7
"Group and individual student media presentations"	6
"Video conferencing/with industrial partnerships/ with other similar colleges in UK and overseas"	3
"Develop self discussion groups"	3
"Team-building project"	1
"Portfolio approach"	1
"One-to-one appraisal"	1

4.1.6 The Relative Importance of Subjects Taught on the BA HBM Programme

The subjects listed in the questionnaire (Question 11) are the principal subjects taught on the BA HBM programme. Respondents were asked to attach to each the importance of these subjects now 1997/98 and in the year 2005. The results are illustrated in Table 24 below:

Table 24

Relative Importance of Subjects Taught in 1997/8 and 2005

	1997/98		2005		Change in	Mean
Subject	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Rank Order**	**Average Change**
Tourism	4.49	1	4.32	3	-2	-0.17
Legislation	4.47	2	4.56	1	+1	+0.09
Related Science and Food Technology	4.37	3	4.17	6	-3	-0.20
Rooms Division Management	4.28	4	4.06	8	-4	-0.20
Accommodation Operations	4.12	5	4.22	4	+1	+0.10
Human Resource Management	4.08	6	4.41	2	+4	+0.33
Financial Management	3.99	7	3.87	9	-2	-0.12
Research Methods	3.98	8	3.52	12	-4	-0.46
Food and Beverage Management	3.90	9	4.11	7	+2	+0.21
Modern Foreign Languages	3.83	10	4.21	5	+5	+0.38
Marketing	3.67	11	3.20	14	-3	-0.47
Strategic Management	3.60	12	3.83	10	+2	+0.23
Information Management	3.48	13	3.54	11	+2	+0.08
Operations Management	3.27	14	3.38	13	+1	+0.11

Question 13 asked respondents if the range of subjects taught on the HBM programme needs changing in any way. The results of this question were:

127	No
66	Yes

If they answered 'yes', then they were required to comment on what additions they believed were necessary. Some respondents made more than one suggestion:

Table 25

Suggested changes to the curriculum

Suggestion	**n**
Financial management in year 4	17
Information technology in year 4	14
Compulsory modern foreign languages	14
European management and legislation	13
Training and presentation skills	7
Management psychology	4
Increase research skills	3
Increase in practical food skills	2
Customer care	2
Environmental issues relating to hospitality/tourism	2
Study skills	2
Formal career guidance teaching	1
Equal opportunity legislation	1

Sales techniques	1	
Event management	1	
Leisure/recreation management	1	n=66

4.1.7 Graduateness

Question 14 related to graduateness and the skills perceived to be required by graduates. The respondents were asked to rank the given skills in order of importance. Table 26 below identifies the results.

Table 26

Skills in Order of Importance

Graduate Skills			Mean Score
Highest	1	Communication skills	2.83
	2	Interpersonal and team skills	3.28
	3	Motivation and enthusiasm	3.37
	4	Flexibility to adapt to new environments	4.43
	5	Time management	4.60
	6	Information Technology skills	5.04
	7	Innovations and imagination	5.08
Lowest	8	Good numeracy skills	6.15

4.2 The Qualitative Study

Analysis of Interview Data

Eighteen possible respondents were identified for interview and these were contacted by post. They were reminded of the aims of the study and how important their views were to the research and were also told they would be contacted by telephone with ten days. As previously stated, the 18 were selected depending on the grade they gave to question 9 (this referred to the relevance of the programme to their present position). Nine were selected who rated either 1 or 2 (low relevance) and 9 were selected who rated either 4 or 5 (high relevance).

The respondents were contacted later by telephone and finally it was agreed that 6 would be interviewed 'face to face'; 2 would be interviewed by telephone and a further 4 would respond in writing. The interviews focused on the HBM's programme relevance for their current hospitality position and their experience during their studies at Birmingham. In particular their opinions were sought on the curriculum of the programme and the respondents were asked for specific suggestions for improvement.

Figure 5 presents a summary of the interviewees' profiles. Some background information is presented here in order to enable the reader to contextualise both their comment and the ensuing analysis and discussion of the interview data.

4.2.1 Profile of Interview Sample 1 (Graduates)

Figure 5

Gender		Present Post	Nationality	Previous experience before studying	Year of graduation
A1	Female	Hospitality Marketing Manager (large commodity company in London)	Danish	Yes Hospitality	1996
A2	Male	Hotel Software Trainer (South East England)	English	Yes Not in hospitality	1995
A3	Female	Training Manager Pizza Hut (Hong Kong)	Chinese	Yes Hospitality	1995
A4	Male	Personnel Department Hotel (USA)	Irish	Yes Hospitality	1995
A5	Female	College Lecturer Hospitality subjects (UK)	English	Yes 25 years in hospitality industry	1994
A6	Female	Catering Manager (Hospital Catering NHS – UK)	English	Yes 9 years in hospitality industry	1996
A7	Male	Hotel Administration (South East England)	Irish	Yes Hospitality industry	1994
A8	Male	Assistant Manager Small hotel (Wales)	British	No	1995
A9	Female	Restaurant Supervisor Private Club (New Zealand)	New Zealand	Yes Limited in hospitality industry	1997
A10	Female	Front Office Supervisor Hotel (New York, USA)	Thai	No	1997

A11	Female	Human Resource Manager Hotel (Ireland)	Irish	Yes Hospitality industry	1994
A12	Female	Conference Organiser University Halls of Residence and Conference Centre (UK)	British	No	1997

The above sample of students was asked a number of questions which I considered pertinent to this study. Some of these relate to the college in question, some relate to their feelings about the hospitality industry and some have broader implications of hospitality management education. Broadly the questions were as follows:

1. Why choose Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies?
2. Why study hospitality management?
3. What were your career aspirations before starting the course?
4. What are your feelings about the relevance of the BA Hospitality Business Management programme?
5. What changes do you propose should be made to the BA Hospitality Management programme?
6. What are your views on the Industrial Placement period?
7. What is your opinion of the staff/student relationship for your programme?
8. What do you understand by the concept of graduateness?
9. Do you feel that a postgraduate qualification is desirable, or necessary, for a hospitality manager?

The responses to these questions have been transcribed and extracts of the transcripts can be seen in Appendix 12. These responses have been collated and discussed in Appendix 12. Most of the discussion relating to the analysis of the interviews can be found in Chapter 5.

4.2.2 Profile of Interview Sample 2 (Senior Programme Administrators)

Three senior course administrators were identified to participate in the research - they were:

Figure 6

Senior Programme Administrators

B1	Post	Director of Tourism and Leisure Programmes
B2	Post	Director of Hospitality Programmes
B3	Post	Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality)

The interviewees were given some of the quantitative data analysed from the questionnaires and asked to comment on the findings. Extract transcripts of all interviews can be found in Appendix 12. However, the main points are summarised below:

Postgraduate studies

Respondents noted that many of the graduates were more interested in studying for an MBA than an industry-specific higher degree.

Importance placed on subjects taught now and 2005

The respondents were surprised by the focus that the graduates put on operational and knowledge-based subjects.

Changing the range of subjects

The respondents were pleased that the graduates were largely satisfied with the programme. However, they were not complacent and they thought that options, linked to contemporary developments and taught in small groups, would be a useful addition to the final year of degree programmes.

Ranking of graduate skills

The respondents noted that the softer skills, eg communication and teamwork, were seen as most important by the graduates. However, the respondents themselves thought that those skills ranked low by the graduates, notably mathematics and information technology, became progressively more important as careers developed.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has set out the results of the questionnaire. The results contain some findings which may apply generally to higher education courses in hospitality management. Other findings relate more specifically to higher education in a further education college setting. Some of the findings relate specifically to the institution which was investigated and cannot be extrapolated further. The following chapter discusses the findings that have been derived from the research, both qualitative and quantitative.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

First, referring back to the aims, this study set out to investigate the evolution of hospitality education in the UK. The historical review was presented in Chapter 1.

Second, the study attempted to compare existing models of vocational education and to ascertain their relevance to hospitality management education. In Chapter 2 hospitality management education has been reviewed as an entity in the context of vocational education. The changes that have taken place in the vocational education system and the effects of the political, industrial and educational debate have been discussed. They have shown the evolution which has led to the current UK situation.

Third, a brief historical review of the BA (Hons) Degree in Hospitality Business Management at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies was undertaken, and the results are set out in Chapter 1. The results highlight the transition of graduates to the workplace.

Fourth, this section analyses the results of the follow-up study of those graduates from 1992-1997 and reviews the students' perceived preparedness for industry in relation to programme content and delivery.

As the results have been analysed a number of themes have emerged and the discussion will be aligned with these themes. Where possible some more generally applicable

indicators have been identified as issues for wider application to vocational education and hospitality management education. The themes are as follows:-

i) Course Content

ii) Teaching Methods

iii) Industrial Placement

iv) Graduateness

v) Employment Issues

5.1 Course Content

The programme is constructed on a modular basis (see Appendix 3) and is semesterised. The four-year programme is divided into core business modules and hospitality specific technical modules. The programme progresses from practical, through operational to strategic level, with a full year of industrial placement spanning years 2 and 3.

The graduates themselves, after a period of time in the industry and having had time for reflection, still consider the course content to be highly relevant in preparing them for work in the industry. This is despite the fact that over the years both industrialists and industrial bodies have made generally non-specific complaints about hospitality management programmes and the graduates they produce. This provides an interesting paradox - is the college under study very special in being so successful?

It could be argued that it is different from some mainstream colleges and universities in bearing a closer relationship to the European model of hospitality management education (Chapter 2, p69) than the typical British and Northern American model. An

alternative explanation could be that the industrialists are continually 'crying wolf'. Indeed it has been noted earlier that industry generally takes little interest and has little involvement with the education of its graduates. One final point worth noting is that it is interesting that the usefulness of the course is reflected however the data is analysed.

With regard to practical skills, these are taught in colleges, often in realistic working environments, before the students go into industry. The results show that these skills are further developed and enhanced during industrial placement with students highlighting that this gives them increased confidence in the use of their technical skills.

This is supported by both the qualitative and quantitative findings, eg

> "My confidence, technical and interpersonal skills improved tremendously over the year." (A9)

It was interesting to note that the majority of graduates had gone to work in either English speaking countries, or those where the English language is very important for the hospitality industry. I consider that this probably reflects the limited language ability of UK students despite increasing integration of the UK into the European Union.

Question 13 in the quantitative data (p140) showed that two-thirds of the graduates considered that the range of subjects taught on the programme did not need changing. The remaining one-third who did consider changes would be useful was encouraged to make suggestions. The most significant were four suggestions (88 per cent) which were as follows:

i) Develop Financial Management in year 4

ii) Include Information Technology in year 4

iii) Make Modern Foreign Language compulsory

iv) Introduce European Management and Legislation.

In general I agree with the students. In the case of the first two subjects they are very important to operational managers and are not included in the present programme in the final year. However, some of the subjects that are taught, eg Management of Change and Strategy may be better placed in postgraduate programmes.

This was identified by one of the Senior Programme Administrators who commented:

> *"It is interesting that the top four recommendations are all 'traditional disciplines'. It could reflect that the final year of the programme is possibly not wide enough in scope. It looks as if the subjects such as Strategic Management and Operations Management are best suited to senior managers, perhaps at postgraduate level." (B1)*

Graduate respondent (A9) stated

> *"I believe Conference and Exhibition Management should become an option so that Financial Management and Information Management can continue to a more advanced level."*

I also agree with the respondents that modern foreign languages should be made compulsory. I have already identified earlier that graduates are finding employment only in English speaking countries or jobs where English will be the first language.

With increasing globalisation and integration of the European Union, UK graduates will be at a disadvantage when competing with graduates from hospitality management

schools in countries/regions such as Benelux, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Spain, France etc.

The increasing influence of European legislation, eg Working Time Directive, Disability Discrimination Act etc, has led me to consider that graduates need a greater awareness of European legislation. Perhaps even more important is that they should have a knowledge of where to find and access the information they need to understand and interpret the increasing volume and complexity of legislation emanating from Brussels.

This was exemplified by A1 who commented that:

> *"I believe the final year should have discrete pathways and should include options in Modern Languages, European Legislation, Information Technology and Financial Management."*

Statistical analysis of the results, looking at relevance of the programme against six factors (p131-135), found only one statistically significant result. Those graduates working in organisations employing 100<1000 employees found the programme more relevant to their needs.

I do not consider this result to be surprising since it is, in essence, this type of organisation that the students' education and training has been focussed towards. This is compounded by the fact that most of the respondents, whilst they were students on industrial placement, would have worked in this size of organisation.

An organisation of this size will allow the graduate greater opportunity to specialise and provide better opportunities for career advancement. The smaller organisation, by

contrast, will probably expect the graduate to have capabilities in all areas of the hotel's operations (a Jack-of-all-trades) whilst offering limited prospects for promotion.

The respondents made suggestions for some change that they thought would improve the relevance of the programme to the hospitality industry and these are discussed below in order of decreasing importance as perceived by the respondents (Table 23, p138).

5.1.1 More live projects with local industry (10 proposals)

Whilst this proposal is a good idea in essence and has been used by both the college under study and other institutions, there are some problems in the operation of such projects. I have concerns that projects of this kind are very labour intensive in that for the students to gain full benefit from them they must be well planned and executed. Compounding this is the increasing number of students being recruited to programmes to fulfil government targets making the demand on industry and teaching staff even greater when the unit of funding resource is diminishing.

5.1.2 More Role-Playing Exercises (8 proposals)

This teaching strategy is effective in developing confidence and competence in students in a relatively non-challenging environment. In hospitality management education I can envisage a number of areas where role-play can be expanded, eg, the use of college restaurants with students and staff as customers before introducing them to the public.

5.1.3 Increase Field Study Trips (8 proposals)

Whilst I agree that these are an excellent learning vehicle, and the college under study does use this to a considerable extent, a limitation is cost. This is especially important now that students are increasingly having to work to support themselves through college. Perhaps a fresh approach, looking for new opportunities at low cost, possibly local visits, may prove worthwhile. These could include visits to local towns and cities, hotels, breweries, tourist attractions etc.

5.1.4 More Visiting Speakers (7 proposals)

I consider this to be an excellent idea as it will build upon the visiting speaker base that the College already uses. In addition it will have the added benefit in attracting industrialists into the educational environment in increasing numbers. This will ensure not only that students benefit from learning of the experiences of both successful and not so successful industrialists, but also will ensure that increasingly industrialists will come to understand the educational environment and the needs of students and lecturers.

As one student commented (A1)

> *"The college should make more use of alumni in their visiting speaker programme. They would understand the situation of the students, their fears and doubts, in relation to the hospitality industry."*

As opposed to the foregoing suggestions, the idea of more visiting speakers could also be highly cost effective.

5.1.5 Group and Media Presentations (6 proposals), and Video Conferencing (3 proposals)

I think this is a very valuable suggestion for a number of reasons. First, the use of multi-media within the hospitality industry, eg for conference, communication, Internet reservations etc, is becoming increasingly important. Students need to be exposed to all types of media in a realistic manner and this would ensure that lecturers and students would all keep up to date with developments.

Second, group work is a key skill, and is essential anyway for workers in any service sector organisation. Although group work should not be used extensively in the final year of the programme for assessment, students do benefit greatly from such group activities as the execution of a food and beverage function or conference.

5.1.6 Self-discussion groups (3 proposals)

The College has always encouraged such activities. This idea is open to multiple interpretation ranging from the mentor approach whereby a final year student may agree to mentor a group of first year students, to the 'Open University approach' whereby peer groups formally meet to discuss their studies and to give each other support. The mentoring system would require some financial support in order to provide a small stipend for the mentor.

5.1.7 Portfolio and Appraisal (3 proposals)

This system is already in place for teaching and assessing NVQ and GNVQ programmes. I believe that the portfolio building aspect could provide a focus for the

development and recording of key skills in the progress towards developing and understanding graduate skills and standards.

Unfortunately our experience in developing NVQ and GNVQ portfolios is that whilst they are extremely valuable they are also very expensive in both resource and staff time.

5.1.8 Changes for the future?

I was most surprised that when respondents were questioned about the relevance of subjects taught now, compared to those thought to be needed by 2005, there were no significant differences.

Nevertheless there were some surprises and Senior College Programme Managers were actually shocked by the ranking given to the constituent courses within the programme.

Gamble (1992) identified three major influencing factors on the industry in the 90's and beyond: globalisation, expansion of technology, shift in focus of HRM.
Kanter (1992) commented on the importance of flexibility of the workforce. The findings in Table 24 show that modern foreign languages have a perceived universal importance, in line with observations on globalisation. Human Resource Management also is perceived as increasing considerably in importance, reflecting both Gamble (1992) and Kanter's (1992) predictions. Surprisingly the importance of information management remains at a low rating. This may be due to the better IT skills of the graduates compared to those of their lecturers! Alternatively the students may be making a big misjudgement.

5.2 Teaching Methods

In the section on course content there has already been considerable discussion on possible new teaching methods that will not need repeating here.

The suggestions relate both to new teaching methods as well as improvements to existing methods. In addition to those recorded in the section on content, respondents drew my attention to a number of important new and developing methods that should be considered. Respondents thought that computer-aided learning using both the Internet and self-learning packages were important. I believe that this will become more widespread as universities and colleges are ever more involved in distance learning enterprises. These may be for the local community, for local industries University for Industry (UFI), for global businesses (eg Holiday Inn International) and for professional development programmes which may be made available anywhere in the world where there is a need, and where electronic communication makes this possible. This is also true of video conferencing, which might allow discussion between educationalists, industrialists and students anywhere in the world, presenting international and global perspectives to all participants. These initiatives are becoming increasingly available as the improvement in technology and decreasing costs continue.

Turning to look at the negative side, it was interesting to find that the respondents considered traditional teaching methods, exemplified by formal lectures, to be the least satisfactory. It is intriguing that despite the fact that numerous studies have pointed out the deficiencies of the formal lecture, lecturers still cling to this form of delivery, and are often resistant to innovation.

5.3 Industrial Placement

When questioned as to whether the placement made them more or less enthusiastic about entering the industry on graduation, the results identified that 38 per cent were more enthusiastic, 30.5 per cent less enthusiastic and for 31.5 per cent it had no effect (Table 9, p124). Research undertaken by Purcell & Quinn (1994) revealed similar results with one-third of their sample being less enthusiastic about a career in hospitality after their supervised work experience. Greater attention needs to be given to what happens to students during placement in order to decrease this possible wastage and employers need to be aware of this dilemma.

Chapter 1 identified the nature of the hospitality industry and how it has developed over the years to its present position as one of the UK's largest employers. It then identified how hospitality education had developed as a vocational qualification in conjunction with the hospitality industry. The research then identified that in recent years the relationship between the hospitality industry and education has not been so good. There had been a great deal of criticism of the curriculum of hospitality management programmes. Many prominent so called 'Captains of Industry' had publicly condemned some hospitality degree programmes as not relevant to their needs and stating that they are business degrees with hospitality tagged on.

The general trend of growth in course and student numbers in the UK probably reflects the industry need for graduates. However, changes in HEFCE funding, with a reduction in unit of resource, has led more universities to rationalise with Nottingham Trent University, the University of Central England and another Northern University

being likely to withdraw from provision of hospitality programmes in the near future. It remains to be seen what effect this will have.

Industrial placement has always been a component of these vocational courses. Discussion has revolved around both its importance as a component in terms of teaching and learning, of the commitment of employers, positive viewpoints expressed by Farrell (1997), and CNAA (1992), negative viewpoints expressed by Leslie (1991), Purcell & Quinn (1994). This research has found that the industrial placement year should remain an essential element of hospitality management programmes.

Food and beverage, at 42.8 per cent was the largest area for employment. This is not too surprising since food and beverage is the most labour-intensive of all hospitality operations. Food and beverage is the main focus of the first two years of the programme where students undertake 'role playing' exercises in the College's training restaurants. The research also identified that whilst on industrial placement most students were exposed to many operational food and beverage areas, thus making many of them more competent and confident in focusing on the specialism for career development.

A9 stated that

> *"My confidence, technical and interpersonal skills improved tremendously over the year."*

A large percentage, 85.5 per cent thought that the industrial placement was an important part of the programme, and that it should be retained as an essential

component of the hospitality management degree. Many positive comments were made in relation to this.

A10 stated that

> *". . . it gave me an insight into the whole operation of the hotel. I was able to acquire information from all departments, even the departments not included in my training programme."*

The skills developed on industrial placement included coping under pressure, practical skills and teamwork. Supervisory and management skills were considered least in terms of the skills developed, reflecting management attitudes on practical training being very necessary in hospitality before acquiring a management position.

I do believe that if students have prior experience in the hospitality industry it gives them more realistic expectations of the world of work following their graduation. Indeed it could be argued that it provides them with a worst case scenario, since anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that whilst students are on placement, when the pressure of business increases or where there is a serious staff shortage, they are exploited as just a pair of hands. In addition they are often made to work many additional hours, effectively unpaid, at busy periods such as Christmas. This formative development may help them to define their career choice.

Whilst the hotel sector undoubtedly provides the largest number of placement opportunities, it is by no means the only provider. For example, some students have a clearer idea of their desired working destination, and arrangements are made for the students to go into other sectors, eg hospital catering, contract catering, licensed retail, conference and exhibition, leisure etc.

However, whilst a number of students do find satisfactory placements outside of the hotel sector, I consider that many of these employers are either not aware of their responsibility to develop graduates to work in their sector, or alternatively, do not have the facilities or infrastructure to provide an integrated training package that is acceptable to universities, colleges and professional bodies, eg HCIMA, who award professional membership of their association.

5.4 Graduateness

The respondents were asked to explain what they understood by the term graduateness. Nine of the interviewees admitted outright that they had absolutely no idea of what the term meant. The statement of A2 encompasses the answer when he said

> *"The manner in which someone behaves. It includes the knowledge that they have gained during their studies along with the intangibles that they have gained as a by-product of studying for a degree."*

It was pleasing to note that the findings of this research in terms of the respondents' ratings of those skills which are considered to reflect graduateness, generally reflect those ranked by NAB (1986). However, I was most surprised to find that numeracy was considered of least importance.

Sparkes (1995, Chapter 2) commented on the importance of numeracy, whilst interviews with both the graduates and one of the Senior Programme Administrators showed a perceived increase in importance of the 'soft' problem solving skills, as opposed to the 'hard' IT and maths skills.

In this instance I completely disagree with the graduates as I consider that good numeracy skills are essential life skills. Further to this, anyone working in a business

environment will be dealing with numbers as a matter of course on a daily basis, eg junior manager working on night audit is responsible for reconciling the 24-hour trading period. The duty manager, called to work in the bar at the last minute due to staff absences, may well have to be very agile in the use of mental arithmetic, etc.

With regard to IT skills, it is self-evident that these skills are becoming increasingly important in both everyday life and in the workplace. In the educational context with which I am familiar, those staff who fall behind in the development of their IT skills will fail in the enrichment of both their own life experience and those of their students. To give an example from the hospitality workplace, as competition increases within the hotel industry, hotels increasingly rely upon yield management techniques to boost their room occupancy revenue. This methodology was developed first by the airline industry and has now become extremely sophisticated. Any front office manager who is unable to cope with the necessary mathematical and IT skills needed to interpret yield management data is unlikely to succeed to high level in any hotel organisation.

I believe that industrial placement can be identified as a focus for developing some graduate skills. Possibly the two skills that will have the highest profile are teamwork and coping under pressure.

Interestingly, respondents commented that their leadership skills were the least of all developed on placement. From my own experience and observation I do know that teamwork is of paramount importance for hospitality workers. My interpretation of these observations is that in the placement situation the student will soon have to learn

to be a team player. They will have to rely on the support of other people, and even other departments, whilst providing support to other members of their team.

In many instances, in the placement situation, managers are often unwilling to delegate serious responsibilities to what is, in effect, an unknown entity 'the student'. This is perhaps not surprising. However, I also believe that students in this situation unwittingly develop leadership skills. This comes about through their observation of the behaviour of the managers around them. They soon begin to learn which strategies of management are effective, which ones are ineffective, and which ones are completely inappropriate.

A3 noted that

> *"The placement improves your practical skills and personality, enabling you to deal with all sorts of problems."*

A9 commented

> *"It developed my skills, personality, confidence and my love of the industry."*

One of the limitations that I have noted in the development of graduate skills, and this is probably a national characteristic, is the limitation in the development of modern language skills. This is increasingly a serious shortcoming which will put UK graduates at a disadvantage with their more skilled continental 'European colleagues, as already mentioned.

5.5 Employment Issues

An employment profile (Table 1) showed that the largest single sector for graduate employment is hotels. Given the discussion that has gone before in the preceding sections, it can be seen that this is not surprising. This sector is the largest single provider of employment in the hospitality industry. It also offers the broadest range of job opportunities. However, there are now changes taking place in the structure of the UK hotel industry. This stems from developments in the US lodging industry whereby many hotels now offer good but simple facilities with accommodation only. Such accommodation is popular with the business traveller as it offers them reasonable comfort and security, with the flexibility to make their own meal and entertainment arrangements. For the employer it provides a considerable cost saving benefit as these hotels are much cheaper, eg budget hotels as discussed in Chapter 1, with room rates providing savings to the consumer of up to 70 per cent over the traditional hotel.

The down side of this for the hospitality graduate is that it removes opportunities for career development as there are no traditional departments. Also, even for the manager, limited skills are required to run the operation.

Despite the foregoing, apparently pessimistic outlook, it was pleasing to note that only 2.6 per cent of the respondents appeared to be unemployed following graduation. Even allowing for errors or discontinuity in the results, this is a remarkably low figure when compared to graduates in other disciplines.

Of those graduates who gained employment, 59 per cent took jobs in the UK. The other graduates gained employment in 16 different countries. This reflects the

international nature of the hospitality industry. I also consider, although I do not have empirical evidence, that it reflects the high degree of mobility of the workforce in the hospitality industry.

However, as already mentioned, this mobility probably does not extend to any great extent from the UK to Continental Europe because of language difficulties. Another reason for the diversity of employment destinations relates to the country of origin of the student, eg many students from Hong Kong and China return to their country of origin to work.

Most graduates gained employment in companies with less than 1000 employees. Forty-one per cent worked in companies with less than 100 employees. In one sense this reflects the industry structure, with most organisations being, by EU definition, SME's. However, graduates tended to find employment in larger organisations within this sector.

The research also identified that the majority of respondents had, on average, less than 2 posts since graduation. This is perhaps surprising in an industry with a reputation for a high labour turnover.

The global economy is looking increasingly volatile. The Asean/Pacific Rim countries have had a major shock and are now suffering from a serious recession. The US economy is also looking increasingly fragile, with the dollar now having to compete as a reserve currency against the Euro. The Euro Zone countries and the UK appear to be relatively stable at the present time, having undergone a period of economic

readjustment. For the UK hospitality education system this may well mean a reduction in the influx of full-fee paying overseas students. For the hospitality graduate, it could mean that there will be less opportunity for career development. For the hospitality industry, attempting to re-engineer their businesses, they will have the paradox of having to retain their best employees whilst shaking out the poor performers.

CHAPTER 6

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which are identified below result from the integration of data and viewpoints supplied by graduates who have completed the BA HBM programme at BCFTCS. These recommendations cover six broad categories with a certain amount of overlap between them. They include:

- Curriculum Relevance and Focus
- Curriculum Development and Delivery
- Industrial Placement
- Programme Structure
- Staff development
- Support Services

6.1 To Hospitality Educators

The curriculum should focus on the whole of the hospitality industry, not just on hotels. The respondents commented on this in both the 'write in' parts of the questionnaire and the interviews. Even though a large percentage (26 per cent) do go into the hotel sector, a considerable majority have aspirations outside the hotel sector. Hospitality educators should address this by provision of variety within their programmes. Even within those graduates entering the hotel sector there is no evidence that this was actually their first choice of career destination.

Internationalisation of the curriculum should address more global issues, not just a European perspective. Increasing numbers of the students recruited in the UK institution are either from overseas or wish to take up employment overseas on completion of their degree. This reinforces the need for the curriculum content to have a more international flavour. This could involve staff being developed to acquire the necessary experience of the global hospitality industry.

Eighty per cent of these graduates went into SME's and the hospitality management educators should endeavour to develop more programme material to address SME issues and entrepreneurship. The current focus of most final year hospitality degree programmes in terms of strategic and operational issues, tends to focus on corporate enterprises. This is perhaps unsurprising as information on this sector is more freely available and it has been the focus of large volumes of research since the Second World War. Small to medium size enterprises have more recently been seen to be of importance to the economy. Hence hospitality programmes should reflect this change in emphasis in the world economy.

Hospitality management degrees should retain their unique focus on food and beverage and front of house areas and related skills, particularly as 62.5 per cent of graduates go into these areas. Further education colleges have a particular strength in the provision of operational facilities for food and beverage and front office operations. This gives the FE colleges a competitive edge compared to the new universities who tend to concentrate on business and management skills that they are geared to deliver. This is to the detriment of those skills which the industry say they

require and which researchers, Purcell & Quinn (1994), Foskett (1991), Powers (1980), have suggested are so important.

The findings of this research suggest that there is a relatively low job turnover at junior management level in the hospitality industry. This refutes the findings of HCTC (1992 and 1994) and others who suggest that turnover and wastage are very high, ie we are not doing too badly; we keep abreast of changes but there is no need for radical change.

Industrial placement should stay as an integral part of the programme. It should continue to be monitored carefully for quality, especially given that 30 per cent appear to be turned away from the industry from their perceptions of the placement. While a large majority of the respondents embraced the concept of the industrial placement year, there were, however, some concerns from respondents on the quality of some placements. Universities and colleges should endeavour to maintain standards and continue to remove from the database those organisations not providing suitable placements. The placement period could in future be counted towards the classification for graduation. Providing an all-round development of the student whilst on placement is the employers' responsibility and needs to be taken very seriously.

Guest lecturers should be sought for each course and on each year of the programme. Generally, graduate respondents made positive comments on the concept of guest lectures. This was evident in both the survey and interviews. Many respondents

commented on the way that this enhanced and enriched the programme. This could be built into an invitation lecture series for students and staff.

A structured programme of field visits should be developed, focussed towards the curriculum. These should be priced according to students' ability to pay. The respondents felt that both low cost local and higher cost international field visits should be organised. Suggestions were made including building up a better relationship with the local hospitality and tourism industry and planning a series of visits for each year of the programme.

To continually review the curriculum to meet the needs of the future. Even though 66 per cent of the respondents appeared happy with the programme this could have been a null response. However, 34 per cent were more forthcoming and suggested that the final year of the programme could usefully have some revision. Introduce final year pathways/options, for example financial management, information management, international business and modern languages. These could allow for more specialisation by students.

To identify new methods of course delivery in line with graduates' comments. In both questionnaires and interviews the graduate respondents identified that there were some weaknesses in course delivery methods. Whilst field trips, outside speakers and tutorials all received a relatively high ranking, other methods, notably group exercises and practical work, were considered rather poor. Whilst one needs to be wary of these results, in that the mean scores were all fairly closely clustered, this evidence

should still be given some credence. Some examples of possibilities have been considered in Chapter 5.

The whole concept of 'graduateness' and 'graduate identity' needs to be addressed generically . The research raised the question that even when there were similar terms used by professional bodies, employers and educators, there was no indication that they referred to the same concept. Therefore, the writer recommends that a group , eg a working party, should be formed by the Government to include members of all the relevant groups, ie employer organisations, professional bodies and educators to address this problem and to find a way forward.

6.2 To the College

The College in this investigation should try to develop new markets for delivery of postgraduate work in this industrial sector. This could include innovative delivery methods, eg off-site teaching, the development of a MBA in Service Industry Management. This stems from the findings of the interview data from the graduates that there was a perceived need for a MBA type qualification to follow from their degree at some point later in their career. This was reinforced by comments made by the Senior Course Administration during their interviews. For these graduates the College should investigate methods of flexible delivery.

Provide relevant and up-to-date careers advice service for students throughout their programme to the same standard as is provided in universities. One example of this is that the College should join the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service (AGCAS) normally associated with HEI's. The College had previously applied to

join but were rejected due to inadequate facilities at that time. Much progress has been made in this area and it may be fruitful for the College to apply again.

Provide staff with opportunities for research and industrial updating experience. The College currently has a very generous staff development budget. This is predominantly used for postgraduate studies and conferences. It might be useful to earmark some of this funding for industrial up-dating and industry-based research. This could be accomplished through the College's appraisal system.

In line with the HEFCE report (1998), it is recommended that FE colleges make separate and appropriate provision for the HE students. At present FE and HE students use mixed facilities such as library, refectory and common room. Comments made in the interviews, and personal observation would suggest that the culture of the two groups of students is grossly different. This has been recognised as a weakness of provision of HE in FE colleges by HEFCE in 1998.

6.3 To the Hospitality Industry

I would like to hope that for the future the hospitality industry and its leaders would take a more positive approach to the education and development of its graduates. Industrialists could become more positively engaged with universities and colleges in developing appropriate programmes. I consider that at the present time they seem quite happy to sit on the sidelines and snipe, which I am sure is much easier. Industrialists should also become more involved in course delivery, and I am sure that they would be welcomed into the classroom by students and educators alike since

they would be keen to grasp the opportunity to learn from individuals with current experience of the pleasures and problems of hospitality.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

7.1 Critical Review of the Research Process

In reviewing the research process, it is recognised as having been successful in providing some new insights into the provision of relevant hospitality management education for the hospitality industry into the next decade.

Uniqueness can be claimed on two counts. First, it produced a body of knowledge relating to how hospitality management graduates viewed their education in preparation for the workplace. Second, the whole issue of graduate skills has been discussed from the educational, the political and the respondents' point of view.

The initial stimulus for this study was the researchers interest and involvement in both the hospitality industry and providing relevant hospitality management education. In an ever-changing industry, and with the educational environment constantly under review, there can be no room for complacency. As a senior educational manager, it is the researchers role to remain up to date and to ensure that all teaching staff are fully informed of both education and industry developments. This research has contributed to his personal development to this effect.

7.1.1 General Strengths of the Process

In process terms, the achievements described above are attributed to the flexibility of the study design, the multi-method approach and the methodological marriage

(Warwick, 1983). However, in operational terms the success of the process derived from the willing participation of the individual respondents and the quality of the relationship established between them and the researcher.

The potential for responsiveness built into the study design, made it possible to recognise and explore key issues emerging from the initial phase in order to provide that greater understanding. There was no predetermination by the researcher of what these issues might be, but the study was designed to allow issues to emerge from the participants rather than the researcher controlling or imposing them, although it is recognised that he brought his own framework to the study.

The approaches used in the study facilitated the researcher 'telling it as it was' and eclecticism of the methods and methodological approaches yielded a richness and depth, which would not have emerged from solely using a narrow positivist approach.

7.1.2 General Weaknesses of the Process

In considering overall weaknesses of the current study, the main consideration is the lack of generalisability and transferability of the findings, although according to Van Maanen (1983), there is no necessity for findings to be generalisable, consistent or permanent in order to be deemed valid. The only certainty in this study is that 'it was the way it was' for the respondents who participated at the time at which the study took place.

Although the findings may not be generalisable and transferable, the methods are transferable and can be replicated. The background against which the study was

conducted is acknowledged both in respect of the individuals and the organisation. Another time and different participants may well have resulted in different issues emerging.

7.2 Reflecting on Achievement of the Aims

To conclude, I consider that the overall aim of the research has been met (as expressed on p5) in that a review of the curriculum has been undertaken by the programme graduates. This has provided a post-experience reflective review of the relevance and relative importance of the individual components of the curriculum. The graduates have also expressed their feelings about the value of the programme in preparing them for their industrial posts in the hospitality sector. The way in which this broad aim has been achieved will be demonstrated in more depth by consideration of the original objectives of the research (p5).

i) I investigated the evolution of hospitality education in the UK in its own context. That is to say in the context of the industry and also the context of vocational education.

My findings were that although the hospitality industry is a major sector of the UK economy it is sad to note that this is not reflected in the professional status of the managers in this sector. This situation is probably partially brought about by the very vocational nature of the industry. It is perceived as highly operational rather than intellectual. Evidence for this is provided in the literature review in Chapter 2 where Hawkes (1997) who is perceived as a 'Captain' of the industry, actually

asks for hospitality management educators to provide their students with more practical skills to the detriment of 'desk bound studies'. This viewpoint from a high profile member of the industry can only help to maintain this academically negative status quo.

ii) In researching the modes of vocational education I undertook a broad ranging review of the international situation. I found that there was a dichotomy between the European model (Practical orientation) and the North American model (Theoretical orientation). The UK model aligns most closely with the North American model. However, there has been pressure for change towards the European, or more notably the German, model of vocational education. This pressure came from the former prime minister, John Major himself, and the current government so far looks set to continue along this route. Strangely, the college under study has gained much credibility from both industry and government bodies because it has actually pre-empted this process of moving towards the European (Practical) model. Whether this will prove to be wise in the long term remains to be seen.

iii) Objective 3 was met by first reviewing hospitality management education and the development of HND and Degree programmes in this field. A more in-depth review was made of the BA HBM programme at the college under study. I noted earlier that one of the major objectives of the programme has been the development of transferable 'key skills' which would help the students in their transition to the workplace. One

of the important features of the programme that I noted was the period of industrial placement. The student experience of industry gained in this period was a major factor in forming the student views of the industry. A bad experience often leads to graduates seeking a career outside of the hospitality industry. Employers would do well to note this if they wish to continue to attract high quality graduates into management posts.

iv) A major objective of mine was to carry out an empirical study of Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies graduates to study their perceived preparedness for work in the hospitality industry.

In considering this objective I set out a conceptual framework for the research. The graduates' perceptions of their preparedness for the industry could be seen as being dependent upon a number of factors and I chose to examine 5 of them in detail. These were set out in Figure 3, page 87. The following discussion presents an integrated view of the way in which these five factors impinge on the graduates' perceptions of their preparedness for industry.

With reference to choice of career opportunity I found that this factor was influenced by, in some cases, their experiences of the industry prior to joining the programme. These students already had a clear idea of their proposed career path. For the majority of students the industrial placement period provided a crucial deciding factor, as already mentioned in the discussion of objective 3. I did find that the graduates

considered that the programme had a major focus towards certain sectors of the industry, eg hotels. On reflection, I can see that this is true and I feel that it is something that the institution should address for the future. It would be interesting to see whether this situation is reflected nationally. If this was found to be the case, then higher education establishments should review their curriculum to broaden its aspect. In the case of the college under study this would mean including teaching and case materials for public sector operations such as hospital, prison, school meals etc.

The public in general seems to have a negative perception of work in the hospitality industry. This is not necessarily true of hospitality management graduates. However, I believe that they do have the wrong perception of the industry. This incorrect perception may well be due to contradictory factors affecting the students prior to joining the programme. For example, they will know of the low public esteem for the industry, possibly reinforced by friends and family. However, they may have been told by their schools career officer that the hospitality industry will suit them very well. Unfortunately, they may have very little experience on which to make a judgement themselves. Such experience as they have would likely be formed from their observations as a consumer, eg on holiday. This mismatch of expectations often leads to disappointment with the industry and a wastage in terms of both utilisation of the educational system and of trained employees entering and staying in the industry. Perhaps the UK can learn from the French

and Swiss hotel schools, who insist on applicants for their programmes having experience of working in the industry prior to acceptance onto their programmes.

7.3 Personal Reflections

In reflecting on the study, the researcher recognises that considerable growth and development have occurred in terms of research abilities and at a personal and professional level.

The researcher acknowledged his positivist base at the outset of the study but grew to admire the phenomenological world. A greater understanding and appreciation of the positivist and phenomenological philosophies developed, along with consideration of the interface between the two. The researcher believes, on the basis of his own experience, that real benefit could be derived from a 'coming together' of researchers from each 'camp' and development of a greater mutuality between the two philosophies.

This study confirmed the researcher's view that research of this nature should not be an esoteric, irrelevant activity, rather it should be rooted in reality, relating to real people in real situations. The researcher recognised the importance of 'giving something back' to the participants however small that might be and leaving them with a positive view of research so that they would be willing to participate again.

The achievement of the aims of the study has resulted in the researcher developing a growing confidence in his own research skills. The variety of methods adopted have

increased the researcher's repertoire and, it is hoped, that this expansion will benefit, and be continued in, future research activities either personally or in support of others.

The study was not without its challenges. Addressing philosophical issues, handling the data and generating statistical outputs, negotiating meanings and shared understanding and finally preparing the thesis have all been demanding, yet enriching, experiences for the researcher.

7.4 Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations in this section are designed for future research. Anyone interested in hospitality management education might consider the following:

i) The study should be replicated with a different population. This study sampled members of a specific alumni group. Future research could survey other groups of hospitality managers; members of the professional body HCIMA, or other universities.

ii) Graduates of hospitality management programmes who are employed in the hospitality industry could be surveyed regarding the reality of the value of their degree. Contrasting college graduates with a degree in hospitality to those with a business related degree would provide valuable information. Two groups could be surveyed: those recently employed and those who have been in the industry for five or more years.

iii) The findings of the research were most surprising in respect of the respondents ranking of Information Technology and Numeracy skills. From both my experience in the industry and from my point of view as an educator I find these comments inexplicable. This surely provides a major area for future research, particularly given the governments moves to consolidate good numerical skills from pre-school through to the workplace.

7.5 Endnote

Morrison (1998, p13) defines change thus:

> *"Change can be regarded as a dynamic and continuous process of development and growth that involves a reorganisation in response to 'felt needs'. It is a process of transformation, a flow from one state to another, either initiated by internal factors of external forces, involving individuals groups or institutions, leading to a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes".*

Working as I do in a college renowned for excellence, I am fully aware that 'resting on one's laurels' is not an option for success. In hospitality education, working in partnership with industry, despite all its shortcomings, and difficulties, is essential. This is also well expressed by Morrison (1998, p10) who says:

> *"Education could be informed usefully from business perspectives on the management of people and organisations. Further, the business community is at the forefront of change because not to be so would be to court failure, closure and demise. The logic of survival leads to the management of change".*

It is my view that educationalists should take a more pragmatic approach to the provision of education, to quote Morrison (1998, p10) once more:

> *". . . there is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained in the world of education by educationalists adopting a less insular and more eclectic view of effective practices in the management of change, moving beyond the parochialism of 'this is the way we do it in education' to a much more open view of 'how might we do it better'."*

Finally, this study has sought to review the ongoing needs of the hospitality industry through the senses of the graduate respondents, and to provide suggestions for initiatives which might 'help us do it better' in the future.

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HOSPITALITY

PARTNERSHIP

Strengthening Employer-Education partnerships within the Hotel and Catering Industry

Code of Practice

HOSPITALITY

PARTNERSHIP

for Work Experience in Management Courses for the Hotel and Catering Industry

Appendix 1

The Educator

- Should allocate sufficient resources to recognise the value of the work experience component of the course.
- Should inform the employer about the specific nature, aims and objectives of the course which the student is following and, in particular, the aims, objectives and duration of the work experience component.
- Should provide a thorough brief for students on the general expectations of industry and the particular needs of the company and/or unit providing the placement.
- Should prepare the student for completing application forms, preparing a curriculum vitae and attending selection interviews.
- Should establish regular contact with the employer and identify the educational tutors with whom contact should be made.
- Should organise contact with the unit to discuss with the student and the mentor the performance and progress achieved.
- Should ensure that visiting tutors are fully conversant with the background of the individual student, progress to date, and the agreed framework of the work experience.
- Should arrange post experience debriefing with the student and provide written feedback to the employer.

Purpose of Work Experience

Employers, educators and students have specific objectives in their involvement in work experience, but all share some common aims:

- To develop individual maturity, self-awareness and confidence.
- To provide some structured practical experience of the industry, its operations, its customers and its staff.
- To consolidate skills learnt during studies and appreciate industrial standards and levels of performance.
- To enable industry to demonstrate the career potential that is available.

Appendix 1

The Employer

- Should be aware of the particular nature and objectives of the course which the student is following and communicate this information to all staff who will be associating with the student during the placement.
- Should inform students of their policy on reimbursement of travelling expenses before being called for interview.
- Should agree with the educator and the student of work experience devised to meet the needs of the required learning outcomes of the course. There should be consultation with the employer, educator and student where operational demands necessitate a change to the planned programme.
- Should identify a mentor responsible for the student during the period of work experience. The mentor should be able to provide a regular feedback to the student about progress, be available to meet tutors visiting from educational establishments, and ensure that a final evaluation is made to the educational establishment.
- Should provide the student and educator with clear details of terms and conditions including hours of work and pay rates, health, safety, hygiene and image standards and other company policies, before the placement begins.
- Should organise an induction programme commencing on the first day of employment covering the terms and conditions of employment including:
  - the company and/or individual unit
  - introduction to appropriate staff, including mentor
  - health, safety and fire procedures
  - outline of planned work experience programme
  - grievance/disciplinary procedures
- Should arrange end of experience debriefing between the student and the employer.
- Must notify the educator before any action is taken if termination of a student's placement is anticipated. The educator should be notified in advance of any disciplinary proceedings.

The Student

- Must fully prepare for interviews and the work experience.
- Must prepare a set of personal objectives to be achieved during the training period.
- Must understand the learning outcomes of the work experience component and appreciate the nature and type of work that will achieve these objectives.
- Should be aware of the terms and conditions of employment:
  - grievance and disciplinary procedure
  - hours of work and rates of pay
  - hygiene, health, safety and fire regulations
  - uniform and equipment requirements
  - accommodation (if provided)
- Must perform to standards set by the employer.
- Should communicate regularly with the mentor identified by the employer.
- Will undertake projects identified by the employer, as well as meeting any assignments set by the educator.
- Should maintain contact with the educator throughout the work experience component of the course.
- Should recognise his/her role as a representative of an educational establishment.
- Should be aware of the penalties for incompetence and poor performance during the training period.

Appendix 1

Acknowledgements

This code of practice has been produced through joint co-operation between the institutions in the UK involved in education and training at an advanced level for management careers in the industry (CHME) and the Hotel Employers' Group representing the major UK hotel groups. Advice has also been given by employers in all sectors of the industry, and by the Industrial Tutors' Group.

The HCIMA has funded the production of the Code (revised edition).

Further copies or information on the Hospitality Partnership may be obtained from:
HCIMA
191 Trinity Road
London SW17 7HN
Tel: 081-672 4251

May 1993

Introduction

This code is intended to help employers, educators and students concerned with the work experience component of management courses.

Given the range of courses and work experience involved, a code can be no more than a framework of good practice for each of the parties. It can in no way replace or detract from the importance of good communication between educator, employer and student.

The code is not intended to be restrictive, but rather to be supportive and flexible, providing scope for innovation and encouraging development of the industrial experience component of courses. It recognises the need for equality of opportunities for all students.

A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF WORK EXPERIENCE

OBJECTIVE

This Partnership Agreement is intended to help employers and educators provide work experience on hospitality and catering courses for those aged over 16 that supports the learning needs of the student.

PARTICIPATING EDUCATORS

Participating educators recognise the need to include a component of work experience within a hospitality and catering course that is linked to pre-determined learning outcomes and commit themselves:

- To allocate sufficient resources to support the work experience component of the course.

- To inform the employer prior to the placement about the aims of the course and, in particular, the objectives and duration of the work experience component, including any set assignments, learning outcomes and assessment processes.

- To provide a thorough brief for the objectives of the placement on the general expectations of the industry and the particular needs of the host organisation to the student.

- To establish regular contact with the employer and identify the tutor/lecturer with whom contact should be made.

- To support the Code of Practice for Work Experience in the Hospitality and Catering Industry (as set out in the booklet issued to students).

PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS

Participating employers recognise the need to provide appropriate opportunities for students to experience work in the Industry and commit themselves:

PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS

Participating employers recognise the importance of consistent quality for relevant vocational education and commit themselves:

- To expect appropriate employees to become involved in college activities in a consistent way and support them in developing relevant expertise with college assistance as required.

- To recognise educators ability to collect and interpret data and to impart objective advice, drawing on many sources.

- To consider/develop educator representation on management task groups and business reviews.

- To understand current policy with regard to Higher/Further Education quality assessment and audit.

- To assist educators to develop their ability to supply high quality specialist services, e.g. in training.

- To provide access to corporate activities for purposes of development of up-to-date learning materials.

PARTICIPATING REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

Representative and awarding bodies commit themselves:

- To require evidence of specialist employee involvement in, and agreement to, new unit/ programme design, review and course assessment.

- To support and develop the use of learning materials and assessment procedures derived from current industry practice.

Introduction and Rationale

The hotel and catering industry continues to expand, now employing in the region of 1.2m people (Employment Gazette 1992). Three factors combine to generate demand for a large number of qualified hotel and catering managers:

(i) the size of the industry

(ii) the complexity of the hotel product/service package and associated service delivery systems

(iii) the relatively small unit of production i.e. the individual hotel.

The Hotel and Catering Training Company (HCTC) in a forthcoming report (Meeting Competence Needs) highlight the shortfall between the required number of qualified management staff anticipated in the next few years and the current output of U.K. colleges etc.

Within the local area a similar picture is found .The 1992/3 West Midland Labour Market and Skills Trends' Report confirmed the importance of hotel and associated management skills stating, "Distribution, Hotel and Catering contributed most to the region's GDP in 1990". In 1991 the West Midlands Economic Review found that "the region continues to be regarded as a favoured location for service industry relocations and inward investment" and went on to show the need for managers with higher skills.

Demand for graduates in hotel management is clearly articulated through our contacts with employers both nationally and internationally and the college's Industrial Liaison Board is also supportive of course development in the field of hotel management.

Demand from prospective students may be gauged in several ways : enquiries from current National Diploma students in this and other colleges; the level of applications for the existing courses in the field and enquiries generated by the extensive participation of the college in national and international careers fairs.

The proposed BA (Hons) in Hotel Business Management is further calculated to appeal to potential students in that it focuses on the hotel sector of the industry; past experience shows that this is the sector in which the majority of hotel and catering students intend to pursue their careers.

The college is confident that with its specialist facilities, experience in the field and close links with the hotel industry, it is in an ideal position to deliver a high quality degree programme.

2. THE AIMS AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

2.1 Aims

A key aim of the programme is to produce graduates with the knowledge and skills which will enable them to enter the hotel industry with the potential of making an immediate contribution to the management team. Furthermore, it would be expected that a significant number of graduates, given the necessary motivation and personal qualities, would be able to progress eventually to senior management positions with hotel companies.

The key characteristics of the graduate will therefore be the ability to anticipate and prevent problems arising in the organisation and to resolve problems that do arise realistically, given the constraints operating in a particular situation.

As with most industries, the manager is faced with the problem of achieving results through others. In the hotel industry, given the characteristics of labour intensity and a high customer contact system, this ability assumes even greater significance. Personnel and customer management skills are therefore developed as a key course component.

Hotel organisations are, first and foremost, businesses. The business components of the programme will examine and develop concepts relevant to both the internal and external hotel business environment.

Characteristic features of the hotel industry include:

(i) Rapid growth, both nationally and internationally.
(ii) Increased diversity in both size and type of activity.
(iii) Rapid technological change.
(iv) The complex and dynamic nature of hotel management.

The programme is therefore based on the following contentions:

- That students will be best prepared for careers in hotel management if they have knowledge and analytical skills in the theory and practice of management. In achieving these they should be able to identify the key issues in hotel business situations and have knowledge of relevant concepts and techniques upon which to draw in constructing and implementing realistic operations plans.

- That the programme should develop as an integrated whole so as to enable students to relate the various components of study thus facilitating the analysis of hotel management problems.

- That there is a particular requirement in the hotel industry for well-developed personal qualities and skills. These include authority, maturity, responsibility and good communication and presentation skills.

- That the programme should be flexible to reflect changing environmental and organisational needs.

- That the programme meets the professional requirements of the H.C.I.M.A.

2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme is constructed on a modular basis. The basic module consists of 45 hours of total learning support but double modules and modules of 1.5 value have been included where appropriate.. The structure of the programme is shown diagrammatically below. (See 'Programme Design')

The programme is devised as a four year sandwich with a one year period of industrial placement in the second year. Each of the three years of full time study consists of a core of management modules to a total module value of 5.0. Each year, the core is supplemented by technical modules which are based on specific features of the hotel business. In each of years one and three the total module value for technical modules is 5.0. In year four the technical module value is 3.0.

In Year four of the programme, a broader, strategic and conceptual approach is emphasised. Students are expected to reflect this in their work during course modules and on the project.

First Year

All modules will be spread throughout the three terms of Year 1. Single modules will receive 45 hours total learning support approximately two thirds of which will comprise the formal lecture/seminar programme. Double modules will receive 90 hours total learning support; again approximately two thirds of which will comprise the formal lecture/seminar programme. The technical module Food and Beverage Studies will receive proportionately more learning support due to the inclusion of the practical sessions in the College's restaurant facilities .

All modules are compulsory. The Core Modules introduce students to a range of business and management practices and principles. The Technical Modules concentrate on introducing students to practical aspects of hotel management relating to food preparation, service and issues surrounding the management of hotel accommodation. A key aim is to equip the student with the necessary skills and knowledge for the industrial placement year. Applied Marketing is also introduced at this stage laying the foundation for the later marketing modules.

Second Year

On completion of Year 1, students will undertake industrial placement for a one year period, unless they are able to claim partial or full exemption on the basis of Accreditation of Prior Learning/Experience. Details about the aims and contact of the industrial placement are given more fully in section 4.4 below.

Third Year.

All modules will be spread throughout the three terms of year 3.

The core, management modules, will build upon the introductory material covered in Year 1. They will also draw upon the students' experience gained during the Year 2 industrial placement with a view to developing a firm appreciation of the management issues and concepts to be studied.

The technical modules will similarly seek to further develop the work begun in Year 1 whilst focussing on the experience gained in an industrial setting.

Fourth Year

All modules will spread throughout the three terms of Year 4.

The final year takes the student into the wider management arena. The core modules concentrate on strategic and international issues. The technical modules will complement the approach by giving students the opportunity to develop conceptual knowledge and analytical skills in applied operations management and conference and exhibition management. The implications of strategic development for the operations manager will provide for integration between Core and Technical Modules.

Students reading for the Degree with Honours will take all modules. The project will not be compulsory for students reading for the Degree.

2.3 RECOGNITION BY PROFESSIONAL BODIES

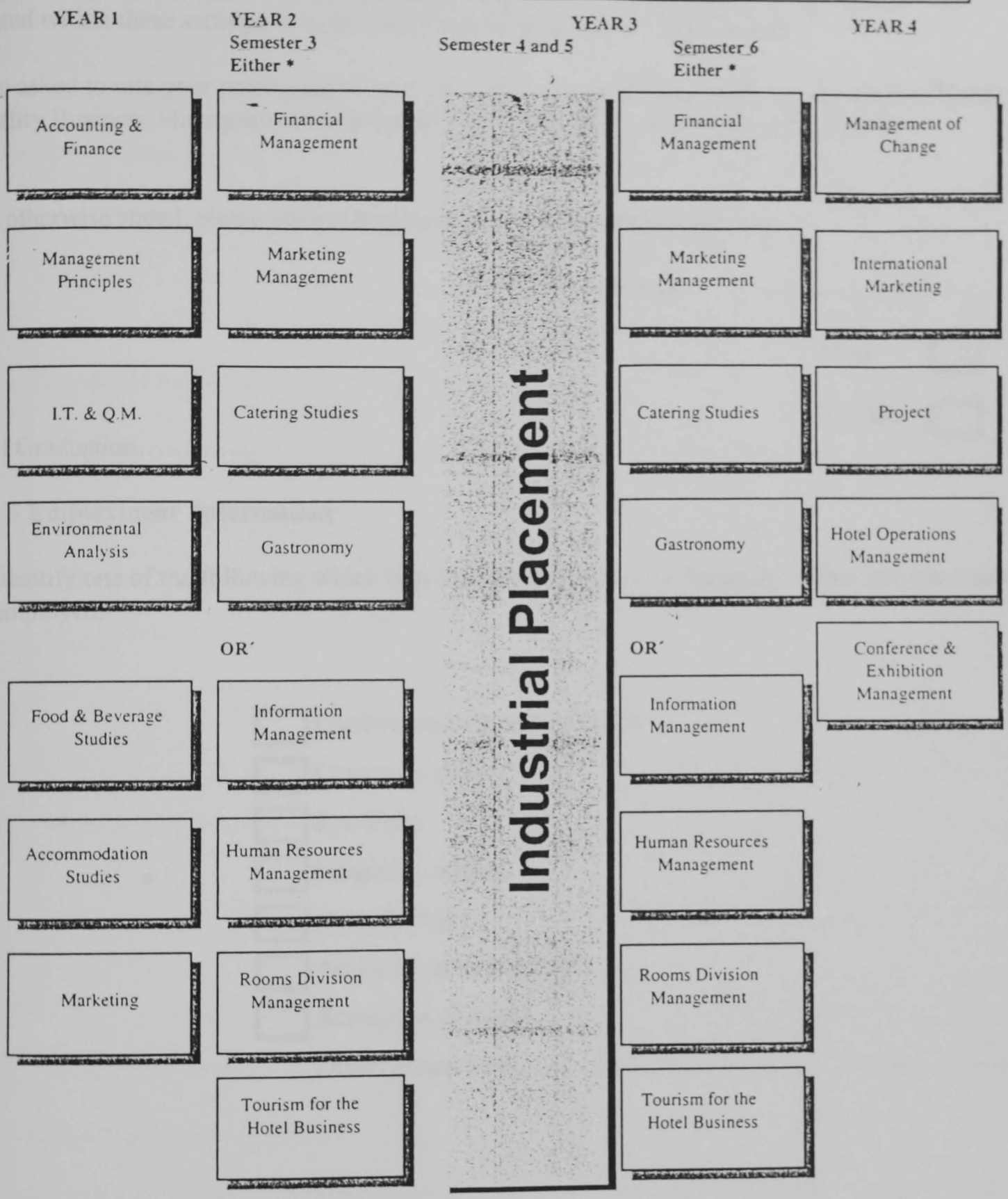
The curriculum content and industrial placement within the programme will ensure the eligibility of successful students for Associate Membership of the Hotel Catering and Institutional Management Association - the hotel industry's main professional body.

2.4 N.V.Q. DEVELOPMENT

The Course Team anticipate the completion of a "mapping" exercise to ascertain the possibility of students acquiring appropriate NVQ competencies and/or awards as a consequence of completing the degree programme.

Appendix 2

BA HOSPITALITY BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME



* Modules carry a weighting of 1, 1.5 or 2 for the purpose of assessment contribution and learning hours

Five levels of modern foreign languages are offered for complimentary elective studies in all years.

The items below have been designed to generate a profile of the professional working in the hospitality industry. The question range from the type of employment, the industry sector, and the activities associated within these settings through your personal employment experiences.

You are asked to rate your perception of how well your education while studying for the BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management has prepared you for the demands of your present post.

Unless otherwise stated, please answer by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

Name (optional).....

Male ☐

Female ☐

Year of Graduation.....

Part 1 - Employment Information

1. Identify one of the following which best describe the type of company by whom you are currently employed:

☐ Conference/Exhibition Centre
☐ Contract Catering
☐ Fast Food
☐ Hospital Catering
☐ Hotel (Group)
☐ Public House/Restaurant
☐ Restaurant (Private)

Other, please state.....

2. Please state the location of your employer:

Town/city .....

County/country .....

3. Please state the approximate number of employees in the organisation .....

4. Please state your present department e.g. (accounts, banqueting, etc.)

.....

5. How many full-time positions have you held in the hospitality industry since graduation?

.....

Part 2 - Placement Information

6. Did you undertake a period of Industrial Placement as part of your course?

☐ Yes ☐ No exemption gained

Please go straight to question 7

6.1 Please state the sector of the Hospitality Industry where you undertook Industrial Placement E.g. hotel, conference, licensed retail, etc.

6.2 How would you evaluate your period of Industrial Placement?

	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good
a) In developing Practical skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) In developing your Supervisory skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) In developing your ability to cope under pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) In developing your Management skills	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) In developing your ability to participate in teamwork	☐	☐	☐	☐
f) In developing your for your future career	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other comments .....

6.3 How did the Industrial Placement affect your choice of subsequent career.

I. It made me more enthusiastic about a career in the Hospitality Industry. ☐

II. It made me less enthusiastic about a career in the Hospitality Industry. ☐

III. It had no affect either way. ☐

7. Would you recommend that an Industrial Placement period is an essential part of a Hospitality Management degree course. Please explain the reason for your answer.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Reason.....

.....

.....

.....

8. Have you, or do you intend to study for a post graduate qualification?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please state the title of the course and reason for studying at postgraduate level.

Course .....

Reason .....

.....

.....

Part 3 Relevance of your Hospitality Programme.

9. How would you rate the relevance of the BA (Hons) HBM course in terms of your present employment.

LOW 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ HIGH

10. **Teaching methods experienced**. Please rate the teaching strategies used during your course that worked best for you by circling the correct number below.

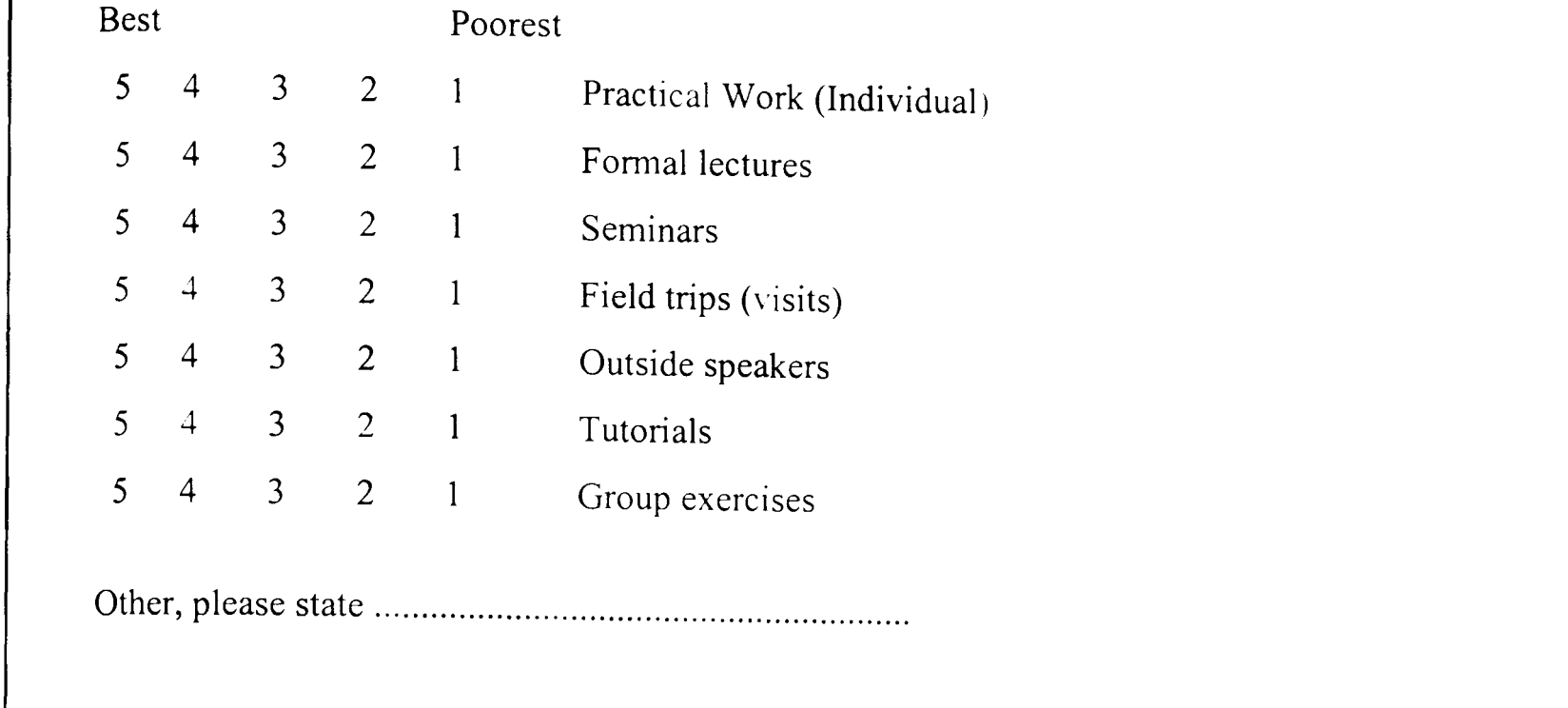
Best				Poorest	
5	4	3	2	1	Practical Work (Individual)
5	4	3	2	1	Formal lectures
5	4	3	2	1	Seminars
5	4	3	2	1	Field trips (visits)
5	4	3	2	1	Outside speakers
5	4	3	2	1	Tutorials
5	4	3	2	1	Group exercises

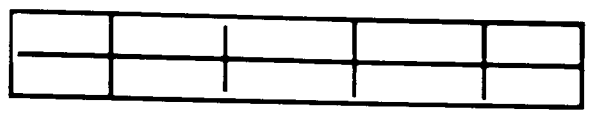
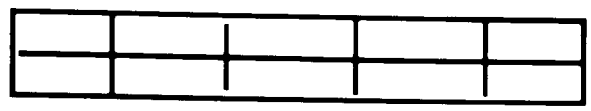
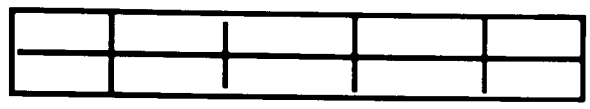
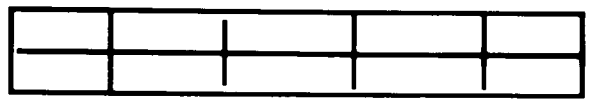
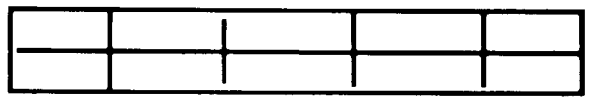
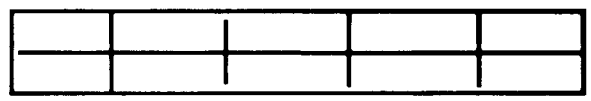
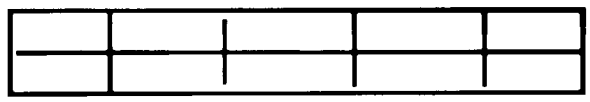
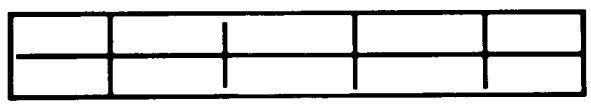
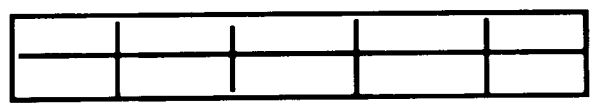
Other, please state .....

10.1 Please recommend any other methods you might suggest for future undergraduate teaching.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

11. The following list includes the main subject, areas included in the present BA (Hons) course. Please indicate both the importance you attached to each subject now 1997/98 and the importance you predict in 2005.



Rooms Division Management		1997/98 2005
Financial Management/Economics		1997/98 2005
Marketing		1997/98 2005
Strategic Management		1997/98 2005
Human Resource Management		1997/98 2005
Information Management		1997/98 2005
Legislation		1997/98 2005
Tourism		1997/98 2005
Related Science & Food Technology		1997/98 2005
Research Methods		1997/98 2005
Modern Foreign Languages		1997/98 2005

12. Do you consider that the range of subjects taught (as indicated in Q 11.) need to be changed in any way?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please proceed to question 13

13. What other main subjects should be taught in addition to those listed in question 11

1. .....

2. .....

3. .....

4. .....

14. Graduate Skills There has been a great deal written over the last 5-10 years by industry and commerce, regarding the skills that a graduate should have. Some of these are listed below, please could you, in your opinion, rank them in order i.e. 1 being the most important:

Graduate Skills	**Rank 1 - 8**
Information Technology skills	
Communication skills	
Interpersonal and team skills	
Innovation and imagination	
Time management	
Good numeracy skills	
Flexibility to adapt to new environments	
Motivation and enthusiasm	

Personal comment

If you have any further comments in respect of improvements in the present BA HBM programme please list them on the reverse of this sheet or attach a separate sheet as appropriate.

Thank you for your co-operation. Please return this questionnaire using the enclosed pre-paid envelope.

Birmingham
COLLEGE OF FOOD · TOURISM · CREATIVE STUDIES

A College Accredited by
The University of Birmingham

Date as postmark

Dear

The Hospitality Business Management programme at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies is nearly eight years old. During this time no follow-up research on graduates of the programme has been conducted to ascertain the professional position they hold or have held in the industry. Additionally, feedback relative to the programme relevancy to industry practitioners has not been gathered.

This study, some eight year after the programme's inception is an attempt to provide a more definitive analysis of the function, competencies and skills of hospitality professionals. It is envisaged that the results of this study can be utilised to make curricular decisions by those preparing hospitality programmes.

Your selection for the study was based on your being a graduate from the programme and having obtained a position in the hospitality industry. It is hoped you will find the time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. You will not be identified as an individual since only group data will be used in the final analysis. You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only.

The results of this research will form part of a doctorate dissertation in Education I am undertaking at the University of Bristol. The results of this research will be made available to anyone who desires them.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have. Please write, call or e-mail to the address or numbers below.

Thank you in advance for assisting with this important research.

Yours sincerely,

David Luke,
Vice Principal (Academic).

Enc.

D. W. Luke • Vice-Principal (Academic)
Birmingham College of Food • Tourism & Creative Studies • Summer Row • Birmingham B3 1JB
Telephone: 0121 604 1090 • Fax: 0121 200 1376 • Web Site http://www.bcftcs.ac.uk • e-mail: d.luke@bcftcs.ac.uk

Birmingham
COLLEGE OF FOOD · TOURISM · CREATIVE STUDIES

A College Accredited by
The University of Birmingham

Date as postmark

Dear

Two weeks ago a questionnaire seeking information about your experience regarding the BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management Programme was mailed to you. Your name was selected because you are a graduate of the programme at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies.

If you have already completed the questionnaire and returned it, please accept my sincere thanks. If not, please could you do so today. Because by sample is small it is extremely important that yours be included in the study if the results are to be representative.

If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or if it has been misplaced please call my office between 7.30 am and 6.00 pm (0121 604 1090) and I will get another in the mail to you.

Yours sincerely,

Vice Principal (Academic).

D. W. Luke • Vice-Principal (Academic)
Birmingham College of Food • Tourism & Creative Studies • Summer Row • Birmingham B3 1JB
Telephone: 0121 604 1090 • Fax: 0121 200 1376 • Web Site: http://www.bcftcs.ac.uk • e-mail: d.luke@bcftcs.ac.uk

Birmingham
COLLEGE OF FOOD · TOURISM · CREATIVE STUDIES

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The University of Birmingham

Date as postmark

Dear

Just over four weeks ago I wrote to you asking for information in respect to your experience of studying the BA Hospitality Business Management Programme at this college.

I write again to reiterate the significance each completed questionnaire has to the usefulness and validity of the study. Since you are a graduate of this college and currently employed in the hospitality industry your contribution is most valuable.

I have enclosed another copy of the questionnaire in case you have misplaced the original.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

David Luke,
Vice Principal (Academic).

D. W. Luke • Vice-Principal (Academic)
Birmingham College of Food • Tourism & Creative Studies • Summer Row • Birmingham B3 1JB
Telephone: 0121 604 1090 • Fax: 0121 200 1376 • Web Site: http://www.bcftcs.ac.uk • e-mail: d.luke@bcftcs.ac.uk

Interview Questionnaire

Name:

1) Why did you choose to study at BCF?

2) Do you feel that studying for a degree at a College as opposed to a University, is an advantage or disadvantage?

3) Did you have any knowledge of the hospitality industry before joining the programme? (Continue below if yes):

4) What do you feel was the most relevant part of the programme in relation to your present position:

5) Do you believe there are any changes that could be made to the programme to better prepare graduates for Hospitality positions? (If so please comment):

6) Do you feel that the industrial placement, experienced as part of the programme, helped you in your present position? (Give reasons why):

7) What do you think of the of the staff/student relationship that existed at the College:

8) What do you understand by the term 'Graduateness"?

9) Do you feel it would be desirable for the hospitality manager to hold a post-graduate qualification?

Please continue overleaf if necessary.

Thank you for your assistance.

Date as postmark

Birmingham
COLLEGE OF FOOD · TOURISM · CREATIVE STUDIES

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Dear

Re: <u>Research Graduate Perception of the BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management Programme</u>

Thank you for responding to my questionnaire earlier this year.

I need to include some confidential in-depth interviews of Hospitality Business Management graduates and would like you to participate.

Enclosed you will find a set of interview questions. If you agree I would like to have an opportunity to interview you and elicit your responses to these questions. Complete anonymity of the participant is assured.

I will contact you within the next tend days to arrange a meeting, or you may call me on telephone number 0121 604 1090 or e-mail d.lukeabcftcs.ac.uk.

Thank you for your co-operation and participation.

Yours sincerely,

David Luke,
Vice Principal (Academic).

NB: Please complete the attached consent form.

D. W. Luke • Vice-Principal (Academic)
Birmingham College of Food • Tourism & Creative Studies • Summer Row • Birmingham B3 1JB
Telephone: 0121 604 1090 • Fax: 0121 200 1376 • Web Site: http://www.bcftcs.ac.uk • e-mail: d.luke@bcftcs.ac.uk

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INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management Research

Name: .....

I *will/will not be able to participate in an interview in respect of the above research.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

*Delete as appropriate

D. W. Luke • Vice-Principal (Academic)
Birmingham College of Food • Tourism & Creative Studies • Summer Row • Birmingham B3 1JB
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Please find attached some of the results I obtained from the quantitative questions. Please can you make some comments:

(Sample HBM 1992-97) (Sample size 193)

1 Respondents were asked if they were considering postgraduate studies and if they were, were asked to give reasons.

2 Respondents were asked to attach to each subject taught on the HBM programme the relative importance for 1997/8 and for 2005.

3 Respondents were asked if the range of subjects taught on the HBM programme needed changing in any way.

4 The respondents were given a list of eight SEEC descriptors in relation to graduate standands/graduateness and they were asked to rank them.

APPENDIX 11

EXTRACTS OF TRANSCRIPT OF ALL INTERVIEWS

Why Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies?

All interviewees were asked why they had decided to study for the BA HBM at Birmingham. There was a variety of responses; four of the interviewees had been recommended to consider BCFTCS and stated:

> *"When considering to study initially, I talked to various people in the hotel industry and found that BCFTCS was highly recommended, plus I lived locally." (A2)*

> *"I was working in an hotel in Ireland and some of my colleagues had studied at BCFTCS previously and recommended it." (A4)*

> *"The college was recommended by my General Manager at the hotel I worked. He said it was the best college in the UK and that the programmes blend practical skills with management theory."(A7)*

> *"My cousin had studied at BCFTCS several years earlier and was now in a very well paid job. I decided to take his recommendation and go for it." (A11)*

Some of the other interviewees had attended an Open Day at the College and were impressed by a number of features. Their comments included:

> *"I attended a Saturday Open Day and was interviewed by the Course Director. The day was well organised and I was very impressed by the facilities, friendliness of the staff and the encouragement they gave me as a mature applicant." (A5)*

> *"I was invited to an Open Day. What really made me decide to go to Birmingham College of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies was the openness of the staff who interviewed me. I was also able to talk to students who were coming to the end of their programme." (A6)*

"I had visited six different universities and colleges. I was impressed with the professional way the staff treated me. The facilities available were the best available. Some institutions I visited had no hospitality facilities." (A9)

When I visited for Open Day, I decided that BCFTCS had good resources. It also had the advantage of being placed in the middle of the City where I would be able to get a job to financially support my studies". (A12)

Other interviewees found out about the College at educational exhibitions in their home countries. They commented:

"I was provisionally enrolled at a hotel school in Switzerland to study a 3 year diploma course at a cost of £10,000 per annum. Then I saw an advertisement for a 'Study UK' exhibition, when I attended I found out I could study for a degree in the UK and the EC would pay the fees."(A1)

"I attended an educational exhibition in Hong Kong and discussed hospitality management with six institutions. I decided that the guidance and support offered by BCFTCS for overseas students was superior, so that made up my mind."(A3)

"BCFTCS was recommended by an agent in Bangkok and it was cheaper than Switzerland."(A10)

"I wanted to study in the UK so I contacted an agent in New Zealand and he recommended either Manchester, Birmingham or Strathclyde. On further investigation I discovered that BCFTCS had won a number of awards for hospitality, and I was told it was a cosmopolitan City so I applied and was accepted."(A9)

Almost all interviewees mentioned the City location of the College. Another factor mentioned was the physical resources available for hospitality programmes.

The second question asked during the interview was, did you feel that studying at college as opposed to a university an advantage or disadvantage? The responses were mixed and included the following:

Perceived as a disadvantage:

"I believe there is more kudos in studying at a university and it also helps when you go for an interview, especially when the post is not directly in the hospitality industry." (A2)

"Studying at an FE college has a few disadvantages ie poor recognition by my peers; the library doesn't open for 24 hours like the Birmingham University library, and finally my employers don't understand how I got a university degree from an FE college." (A1)

"There are a number of disadvantages eg there is a very ineffective Student Guild, no campus, no common rooms, very few societies and overcrowding of the building at certain times during the week." (A12)

Perceived as an advantage:

"Studying at a specialist college is an advantage especially when you are working for a vocational degree. BCFTCS offered such outstanding facilities and it had an excellent contact with the hospitality industry which helped with industrial placement and jobs after graduation."(A9)

(A7) made similar statements regarding the specialist facilities.

(A10) commented that:

"I felt the college was a better choice, after visiting a number of universities I realised that most of the programmes on offer were business studies degrees with hospitality tagged on."

Overseas student, (A3) commented:

"The main advantage for overseas students is the personal care and encouragement and the lecturers get to know your name."

(A4) agreed and made a similar statement after first hand experience stating that:

"You get more one to one tuition. Having recently completed an MBA at an old university contact with tutors was almost non existent. You had to make an appointment and sometimes wait for two weeks to see a tutor, and was glad I studied my first degree at BCFTCS."

Why Study Hospitality Management?

Prestige and status. Vocational courses often have low prestige and status associated with them, despite medicine being the ultimate vocation. Sultana (1992) discussed the issue of the use of hand rather than mind, reflecting the perceptions of the industry. The hospitality industry tends to talk itself down. Bowman (1988) noted a lack of recognition of high academic standards within the academic debate. Wilms (1988) discussed the promotion of vocational education as a tool for equalising status in society, cf John Major.

When asked why they had chosen hospitality management the interviewees offered the following reasons:

> *"I had 25 years experience of hospitality in three different sectors so hospitality was a natural choice."(A5)*

> *"I had worked for seven years in Ireland and the USA in hotels, restaurants and bars, I knew hospitality was for me." (A7)*

During the interviews, the respondents commented at length on their previous experiences in the hospitality industry. This was the main reason for their choice of programme.

(A4) commented that:

> *"I studied at a regional technical college in Ireland to become a chef. After entering the industry I realised that I wanted more than kitchen work so I applied for a hospitality degree programme."*

(A2), (A10) and (A12) indicated their lack of experience of the industry before joining the programme. They all stated that their first experience of the hospitality industry was during industrial placement and this was a shock. They also stated that

as the months progressed they gained confidence in most areas with the exception of the food and beverage areas. Because of this, they had all looked for employment outside of the food and beverage areas.

The consensus among the interviewees was that some experience of hospitality, before embarking on the degree programme, is important.

Career Aspirations

The researcher asked the interviewees if they had a definite idea of which sector of the hospitality industry, they wished to enter before starting the HBM programme. These are the responses to the above question:

> *"I definitely didn't want to work in hotels. As I progressed through the programme, my confidence improved and I think this was because of the group presentations and positive feedback from these. I then became interested in the areas of teaching or training." (A5)*

> *"I wanted to have a change in career and work in hotels. I had been working with computers for a number of years before starting the HBM programme. On graduation, I realised that my hospitality degree and computing skills complemented each other and my earning potential was greater in the field of hotel software." (A2)*

> *"I wanted to work in hotels and to specialise in food and beverage. I had not considered any other sector before starting the HBM course. Then when I graduated and returned to Hong Kong I realised that hotels and food and beverage departments were 'male dominated' and so I looked for an alternative sector." (A3)*

All of the students interviewed had strong opinions as to which sector of the industry they wanted to enter, but on progression through the programme these strong opinions changed. For example, some graduates felt they would only like to work in hotels, but after studying at BCFTCS their aspirations altered as they were made aware of other sectors such as Conference and Banqueting and Public Sector Catering.

Relevance of the Programme

The interviewees were asked to identify the areas of the programme they found to be most relevant to their present position. The respondents made a variety of comments including:

A6 commented:

> *"I think the food safety course was very relevant, although I did not think so at the time. In the field of hospital catering, all aspects of business management and finance are very relevant, because of our budgeting procedures."*

A3, who works as a training manager for a fast food company stated:

> *"Service operations management was very relevant to this post, especially in the areas of yield management, problem solving techniques and queuing theory. The other areas of food and beverage management, marketing and customer care were also very useful. Many of the training programmes I use are based on these theories."*

A8, who is an assistant manager of a small hotel, commented:

> *"I found the whole four years relevant, especially the operational management subjects. The areas of marketing, HRM, and finance are also invaluable in my day to day work."*

Three interviewees referred specifically to the module of Conference and Exhibition Management, which they identified as a positive element to their present position.

One of the interviewees, who returned home to New Zealand on graduation, feels a little frustrated because she believes she is not utilising all of the skills she has gained.

She commented:

> *"My present position does not fully utilise much of the theoretical knowledge I acquired on the HBM programme. I am a restaurant supervisor so, at this stage, the food, alcoholic beverage, service operations management and industrial placement parts of the degree are most relevant. If the management committee were to give me more responsibility, then I believe, I have the ability to improve both the quality and productivity of the business."*

All graduates referred to the importance of information technology and finance subjects, which they felt they used every working day.

Changes to the HBM Programme

The interviewees were asked for their opinions of the HBM programme and if they believed that any changes could be made to the programme so that future graduates would be better prepared for the hospitality industry. Many of the responses at the interview stage, concerning the changes, were similar responses to those recorded for the same question in the questionnaire analysis.

Four interviewees stated that the final year of the programme should have an option package, enabling students to specialise in a variety of different fields. Some of the recommendations included the following:

A9 stated:

> *"I believe Conference and Exhibition Management should become an option so that financial management and information management can continue to a more advanced level."*

A1 commented:

> *"The first three years of the programme is quite broad based but in the final year the curriculum was limited and had no choice. I believe the final year should have discrete pathways and should include options in Modern Languages, European Legislation, Information Technology and Financial Management. These will enable students to specialise."*

Other interviewees were concerned with case material that was used in the final year management and marketing lectures and one stated that:

> *"I think the subjects studied do not need changing, but the case studies used were based upon UK or European companies I believe that the lecturers*

should consider using more international case studies which would help all students including overseas." (A3)

A6 commented similarly, stating:

"There are two main issues, first, I believe the final year could include some options. Secondly, no reference to the public sector catering was ever made in case studies. I work as a catering manager in a NHS hospital and I don't think this sector of the industry was ever mentioned."

There were a few recommendations made relating to how the programme content could be improved and these included the old debate about craft skills. One interviewee commented:

"The programme should incorporate more craft skills in the food and beverage areas. Many hospitality industry professionals keep telling colleges and universities this but they ignore the comment." (A8)

Hawkes (1997) puts the hospitality industry viewpoints, suggesting a need for more emphasis on practical training. Research findings from the graduates agree this is very important.

Another interviewee believed that some lecturers were not always up-to-date, and commented:

"The only comment I have is that some management lecturers' ideas of hospitality management were out-dated. I think the college should encourage them to do some up-to-date research or alternatively, industrial up-dating."(A4)

One graduate stated that:

"The college should have included more outside speakers from industry to give guest lectures. I think these could be included in each year of the programme and could have included past students." (A1)

Industrial Placement

All of the interviewees made comments relating to the industrial placement year. They all stated that this element of the programme was very important and should stay. Four of the interviewees gained exemption from this element of the programme because of their previous industrial experience.

One of these explained why he felt this element was important:"

> *"Even though I gained exemption from placement, I still think this element is important. When students returned from placement the change in attitudes was incredible. Before placement they did not participate well in lectures, but after this year out, they were more confident and mature."(A4)*

Other interviewees expressed the following opinions:

> *"My confidence, technical and interpersonal skills improved tremendously over the year."(A9)*

> *"It gave me first hand exposure to the hospitality industry and gave me more awareness of the world of work. It made it all happen for me."(A1)*

(A1) went on to state that not all students in her year had similar experiences and she made the following comment on the subject:

> *"I believe the college needs to monitor the placements better. I was lucky, but some of my colleagues on the programme had really bad experiences. This resulted in them not pursuing a career in hospitality on graduation." (A1)*

On a more positive note, all of the interviewees thought that the research programme (see Appendix 11) undertaken during the placement was very valuable. One commented:

> *"I found the research programme invaluable, it gave me an insight into the whole operation of the hotel. I was able to acquire information from all departments, even the departments not included in my training programme."(A10)*

The Relationship Between Lecturers and Students

The relationship between lecturers and students was discussed during the interview process. The general consensus here, was that lecturers were very supportive and positive comment expressed included:

> *"The relationship was very open and it encouraged communication and debate in lectures."(A7)*
>
> *"The majority were very helpful and would go out of their way to assist. There were a few who were unapproachable."(A4)*
>
> *"I found the staff to be exceptionally supportive and encouraging, as long as students were prepared to do their best and show an interest then the staff could not have been more helpful. Some students did try and 'bend the rules' and absented themselves lectures on a regular basis and their relationship with some staff became a little strained."(A9)*

The Concept of Graduateness

During the course of the interview, the graduates were asked if they understood what was meant by 'graduateness'. Nine of the interviewees admitted they did not have any idea of what the term meant. Three attempted to answer the question and commented:

> *"The manner in which someone behaves. It includes the knowledge they have gained during their studies, along with the intangibles they have gained as a by-product of studying for a degree." (A2)*
>
> *"Possibly the feeling and abilities it gives a person on studying and achieving a tertiary qualification." (A9)*
>
> *"I assume it is something that a person achieves after graduation." (A4)*

After the interviewer explained a few definitions of the concept of graduateness, the interviewees were asked if they felt, they had achieved it. The comments were very mixed and ten believed that they had achieved this, and three felt they had achieved it only after a couple of years in work.

A9 and A12 commented that "they were not yet confident" that they had achieved all the skills of graduateness, but they were some way towards it.

Postgraduate Studies

The interviewees were asked if they felt that a post-graduate qualification was desirable for a hospitality manager. Three of the group thought that a hospitality degree was enough. Seven believed it was necessary especially if they were specialising in a support role such as HRM, Marketing, Finance or Training. Four of the interviewees had already studied for a post-graduate qualification ie:

A2 - MSc in Information Technology - he commented:

> *"I need a qualification in Information Technology to give me credibility with my peers."*

A11 - Institute of Personnel Development Diploma –

> *"Working as a Human Resource Manager, I need to gain membership to the professional body."*

A3 - MA in Hospitality Management –

> *"The main reason I studied a Masters was to maintain my status in Hong Kong, especially being a female in a male dominated industry."*

The general comments from the other interviewees were that, if it did become necessary to have a post-graduate qualification then they would consider it, but at present they felt that they have the necessary skills required of them.

Other Comments Made During the Interviews

Three students referred to the fact that there were limited facilities at Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies, specifically for HE purposes. They felt that facilities such as quiet study areas, common rooms and small rooms for group planning presentations, role playing exercises and seminars were poor and in fact, non existent. Two students commented on the mixing of FE and HE students in one establishment. This they felt had an adverse effect on their studies, as the behaviour of some FE students was particularly disruptive in situations such as quiet areas in libraries and resource areas of the College.

Profile of Interview Sample 2

(Senior Programme Administrators)

Three senior course administrators were identified to participate in the research - they were:

B1	Post	Director of Tourism and Leisure Programmes
B2	Post	Director of Hospitality Programmes
B3	Post	Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality)

The interviewees were given some of the quantitative data analysed from the questionnaires and asked to comment on the findings. These comments are below.

Postgraduate Studies

B3 *"The main perceptions of the respondents was that a MBA will help them gain promotion."*

B1 *"MBA is universally recognised as 'The Management' qualification and offering sufficient transferable skills to switch to another service industry, typically yielding a higher salary."*

B2 *"I am quite surprised to see 47 per cent of the sample wanting to undertake a postgraduate qualification. Maybe the College should consider offering a MBA in Service Industry Management."*

Relative Importance of Subject Taught Now and in 2005

B2 *"Firstly I am quite surprised to see two of the top three subjects are not featured heavily on the existing programme ie legislation and related science and food technology. Secondly two of the final year double modules do not seem to be rated as particularly important."*

B1 agreed with the above comments and stated:

> *"They have tended to focus more on knowledge-based modules - the importance attached would equate to those most important to an operations manager. I believe that the lower ranked strategic subjects have only limited applicability at this stage in a young manager's career."*

Should the Range of Subjects be Changed in Any Way?

B3 *"A large 'no' response to this question suggests significant satisfaction with the programme."*

B1 *"It's interesting that the top four recommendations are all 'traditional disciplines'. It could reflect that the final year of the programme is possibly not wide enough in scope. It looks as if the subjects such as strategic management and operations management are best suited to senior managers, perhaps at postgraduate level."*

B2 *"It certainly suggests clearly that options are needed for the final year of the programme. The four most popular additions recommended would really lend themselves to smaller group teaching."*

The Ranking of Graduate Skills

B2 *"The three skills that are ranked lowest are the ones which are likely to become progressively more important as careers develop. For example, numeracy skills will become vital as students acquire more responsibility for drawing up and working to budgets. Innovative thinking and imagination also become increasingly important as the job begins to demand more forward thinking perspective. IT and the use of software packages is increasingly important as responsibility increases."*

B3 *"The results would tend to support the assertion that the 'soft ' key skills (like communications, teamwork and enthusiasm) are more important than the 'hard' ones (IT and Maths)."*

B1 *"I think the emphasis on communication, teamwork and enthusiasm reflects the current working environment of these graduates. Perhaps the 'innovatory' related skills are associated with a higher level of management."*